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Official Records

92nd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 3 June 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Al-Mughairy (Oman), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 136 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/69/722/Add.8)

The Acting President: Before proceeding to the items on our agenda, I should like, in keeping with established practice, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/69/722/Add.8, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/69/722/Add.7, Vanuatu has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in that document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 13 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

(a) Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolution (A/69/L.72)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 13 and its sub-item (a), jointly with agenda item 115, at its 51st plenary meeting, on 14 November 2014. Members will also recall that, under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13, the Assembly adopted resolution 69/108, at its 65th plenary meeting, on 8 December 2014.

I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.72.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.72, entitled "World Statistics Day", under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13. By adopting the draft resolution, the General Assembly would designate 20 October 2015 as the second World Statistics Day, under the general theme "Better data, better lives". The draft resolution calls on Member States, members of United Nations specialized agencies, the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations and all other stakeholders to observe the day in an appropriate manner. The General Assembly will also decide to celebrate World Statistics Day every five years on 20 October.

Having achieved consensus after just two rounds of informal consultations, the text builds on resolution 64/267, which designated 20 October 2010 as World Statistics Day, and follows up on decision 45/113 of the United Nations Statistical Commission. The proposal does not create any additional programme budget implications for the United Nations system.

Hungary's interest in the issue of statistics and its decision to actively promote a draft resolution creating impetus for further dialogue and interaction in the fields of statistics stems from its role as former co-Chair of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and from its long-standing leadership activities in the Statistical

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Commission. The role of statistics and reliable data in general and in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the future sustainable development agenda has been reconfirmed time and time again. There is a need to advance innovation and analysis to support national data capacities and a global data partnership.

Since statistics are at the crossroads, there is no better moment and method to affirm this than in a General Assembly resolution that brings worldwide focus to the topic. World Statistics Day creates a universal platform that enhances visibility and facilitates the organization of events and the achievement of synergies. The initiative provides a universal framework for, and new focus on, statistical activities. However, its concrete utilization at the national, regional and international levels remains in the hands of the different stakeholders, based on their special circumstances, needs and priorities.

The first World Statistics Day, in 2010, was an overwhelming success, with activities being organized in more than 130 Member States and territories and by at least 40 international and regional organizations and entities. We have every reason to presume that these results will be surpassed in 2015.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Member States from the bottom of my heart for their overwhelming support for and constructive participation in the open and transparent consultations. We also appreciate the qualified support of the truly cross-regional group of sponsors, which reflects the universal recognition of statistics and their role in creating better lives. In this spirit, Hungary and the sponsors respectfully call on all Member States to support the draft resolution.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.72, entitled "World Statistics Day". I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/69/L.72, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Fiji, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Peru, the Republic of Moldova, the Sudan, Suriname, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates and Vanuatu.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.72?

Draft resolution A/69/L.72 was adopted (resolution 69/282).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 13.

Agenda item 19 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Draft resolutions (A/69/L.67 and A/69/L.68)

The Acting President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2014, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (c) of agenda item 19 to the Second Committee. Members will also recall that the Assembly decided to consider the sub-item directly in a plenary meeting and adopted decision 69/556 at its 81st plenary meeting, on 5 March 2015.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/69/L.67 and A/69/L.68.

In connection with draft resolution A/69/L.68, I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft resolution A/69/L.68, entitled "Establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction", I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

By paragraphs 4 and 5 (a) of draft resolution A/69/L.68, the General Assembly would decide that, first, the work of the working group would be completed by December 2016 and be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration, as stated in paragraph 4; secondly, the working group would hold three formal sessions, at the United Nations Office in Geneva, including one session in 2015 and two sessions in 2016,

each session lasting two days, and additional informal sessions if needed, as stated in paragraph 5 (a).

It is anticipated that the request for documentation contained in paragraph 4 would constitute an addition to the documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for one pre-session document in all six languages. That would entail additional requirements in the amount of $38,300 for documentation services in 2016.

Furthermore, the request contained in paragraph 5 (a) to hold three formal sessions of the working group would require four meetings in 2015 and eight meetings in 2016, in all six languages. Those meetings would constitute an addition to the meetings workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, which would entail additional requirements in the amount of $27,600 in 2015 and $55,200 in 2016 for meeting services.

No provision has been included under the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 for the above activities, and therefore additional allocation of funds would be required.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/69/L.68, additional requirements under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, would arise in the amount of $27,600 of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, and $93,500 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. However, all possible efforts would be made to absorb the additional requirements from within existing resources under section 2.

The Acting President: The Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.67, entitled "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.67?

Draft resolution A/69/L.67 was adopted (resolution 69/283).

The Acting President: The Assembly will next take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.68, entitled "Establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.68?

Draft resolution A/69/L.68 was adopted (resolution 69/284).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan): I thank you, Madam, for convening this meeting. I am very happy to see you presiding over the General Assembly this morning. I would also like to express our thanks for the support we received from the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Sam Kutesa, during the process of holding the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which was held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015.

As the host country of the Sendai Conference, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the 6,500 participants from 187 Member States, which included a great number of Heads of State and Government and cabinet ministers. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his attendance at the Conference, and the many representatives who made the trip with me to Sendai from New York. I would like to extend my gratitude to the following countries in particular. I thank Switzerland, the host country of the meetings of two preparatory committees, and Thailand and Finland for their tireless efforts as co-Chairs of the preparatory and main committees. I would also like to thank Jamaica for its great contribution in chairing the working group for targets on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Finally, I express my appreciation for the preparation efforts by the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and Ms. Margareta Wahlström, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

I strongly welcome the endorsement of the outcome document of the World Conference, namely, the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, as contained in resolution 69/283. I also welcome the adoption of the resolution on the establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology related to disaster risk reduction (resolution 69/284).

Our Peruvian and Chilean colleagues made great efforts to establish those two key elements on implementation of these outcome documents, and I would like to thank them for that. Following the endorsement of the outcome documents, it is important to implement the Sendai Framework. We should conduct a follow-up and review that are coherent with the post-2015 development agenda.

Since 90 per cent of those affected by disasters live in developing countries, disaster risk reduction is high on their priority list. The way that the international community shows its support after the great earthquake that hit Nepal in April will be an important test of its commitment to the Sendai Conference. Japan would like to serve as a co-Chair at the donor conference for Nepal to be held on 25 June. It is important for the international community to continue to support Nepal, from emergency response to recovery, in a seamless manner. In doing so, we can realize "Building Back Better", which is one of the priorities of the Sendai Framework.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the importance of raising preparedness and awareness concerning natural disasters so as to minimize their risks, as also set out in the Sendai Framework. In her concluding remarks at the Sendai Conference, Mrs. Eriko Yamatani, Japan's Minister of State for Disaster Management and President of the Conference, urged that we establish a World Tsunami Day for that purpose. We are considering a draft resolution, to be proposed at the Assembly's seventieth session, on establishing a World Tsunami Day, and would like to take the initiative on the matter.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): In Peru's view, establishing an open-ended inter-governmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction is extremely important. As one of the facilitators of the text of today's resolution 69/284, we would like to highlight the constructive work by the various delegations and their commitment to undertake action in the wake of the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, in March. We are also grateful to the Government of Japan for the Conference's excellent organization and work. It was the first of a series of decisive meetings on sustainable development to be held throughout the year, the others being the third International Conference on Financing for Development, the September summit to adopt the post-2015 agenda and the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, in December.

The goals of sustainable development at the centre of the post-2015 development agenda demand coordinated, effective and, especially, coherent action in all these processes. That is why establishing an expert working group to develop global indicators and finalizing the work to update the Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction is the next step — a small but important step within the framework of the international strategy for disaster risk reduction that will contribute to reaching the central goal of sustainable development that we all desire.

As has been demonstrated, there is a substantive relationship between the occurrence of disasters in a country and its prospects for development. I therefore wish to reiterate our thanks to all delegations, particularly those that participated in the working group. We also thank the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, whose technical support will continue to be extremely valuable.

Mrs. Robl (United States of America): The United States was pleased to participate in the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, earlier this year. We are deeply grateful to the Government of Japan for hosting the Conference and providing invaluable leadership in efforts to address disaster risk reduction. The United States was a strong supporter of the Hyogo Framework for Action and will continue to participate actively in global efforts to reduce the risk of disasters, consistent with the core principle of disaster risk reduction that gives each State the primary responsibility for taking effective measures to reduce disaster risk.

The United States is nonetheless obliged to reiterate its concerns about the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, expressed in our explanation of position of 18 March at the Conference, dissociating itself from certain paragraphs in the Framework containing elements that detract from our collective efforts to address disaster risk reduction. The United States continues to dissociate itself from those paragraphs. In particular, concerning the transfer of technology, the United States supports a broad range of initiatives and mechanisms that provide technical assistance, including through the transfer of technology, to developing countries.

However, we maintain that the transfer of technology must not be coerced and that the rights of private holders of intellectual property must not be abrogated. For that reason we underscore our view that the Framework as it stands does not change the obligations of countries under national law and the relevant international agreements. The language on technology transfer in this Framework can therefore not serve as a precedent for future negotiated documents, including any documents relating to the sustainable development goals or the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or any other negotiations inside or outside the United Nations system.

Mr. Escalante Hasbún (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): With regard to the General Assembly's adoption today of resolution 69/283, an outcome document of the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, El Salvador, as a country highly vulnerable to the effects of natural incidents originating in climate change and other phenomena, is pleased to note the issuance of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports international cooperation in efforts aimed at substantially reducing deaths, victims and economic losses by 2030.

Taking into account the enormous damage inflicted on its economy by the frequent national disasters it has suffered, El Salvador is pleased with the decision of the Sendai Conference to encourage action designed to reduce economic losses to the gross national product resulting from disasters, to reduce damage to infrastructure and basic services, and to increase access to early-warning systems and information on disaster risks. Considering the investments that El Salvador has put great effort into making but that are insufficient to deal with the losses and damage caused by natural disasters, we are confidently expecting improvements in the levels and effectiveness of international cooperation in implementing the Framework in developing countries.

It is essential that the content and implementation of the Sendai Framework be incorporated as a new building block into other significantly relevant international proceedings, such as the International Conference on Financing for Development, specific elements of the post-2015 development agenda, the next World Humanitarian Summit, in 2016, and the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III, which will also be held in 2016. We also call on the system's agencies, funds and programmes and their executive boards to align the Sendai Framework in their work with the agencies, funds and programmes on the ground, in order to strengthen national capacities to deal with potential disasters. The work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction will have a decisive role in ensuring understanding at the global level, while at the same time we can maintain and strengthen an effective response at the local level.

Finally, El Salvador would like to thank the Government and the people of Japan for their successful hosting of the Conference and for their ongoing commitment at the international level to the issue of resilience and disaster risk reduction.

Mr. Coloma (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile is grateful for the support of all delegations in the process of negotiations on resolution 69/284, which we just adopted, and urges all countries to continue to work on following up the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. I would like to again thank the delegation of Japan and all delegations, especially Peru, for working on the resolution, which establishes the intergovernmental group of experts and serves as a triumph in the fight and work to reduce disaster risk.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

On behalf of the President of the General Assembly, I would like to express my gratitude to the delegations of Peru and Chile, which conducted the discussions and complex negotiations on resolution 69/284 in the informal consultations to bring them to a successful conclusion. I am sure that members of the Assembly join me in extending to them our sincere appreciation.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 19.

Agenda item 32

Prevention of armed conflict

Draft resolution (A/69/L.70)

The Acting President: I should like to inform members that the debate on this item will be held at a later stage, to be announced.

I now give the floor to the representative of Turkmenistan to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.70.

Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan) (*spoke in Russian*): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.70, entitled "Permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan". Please allow me to thank all delegations for the constructive and fruitful negotiations that resulted in the elaboration of this comprehensive draft resolution. We wish to especially thank the Department of Political Affairs and the Secretariat for their valuable contributions, support and coordinated work on the draft resolution.

On 12 December 1995, the General Assembly adopted resolution 50/80 A, on the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan. That historic event was the starting point for all actions that followed for Turkmenistan at the international level to define its principles of cooperation with other peoples and States. We value and take pride in the trust placed in us by the United Nations. We are cognizant of our own responsibility to the international community and feel that it is a matter of honour to continue to bring to life the permanent positive neutrality on the strategic sovereign goals of our State in this new and often crisis-filled time in world history. The path of neutrality and the principles it enshrines allow us to successfully ensure such basic criteria as peace; respect for all peoples, cultures and traditions; tolerance and respect for all religions. Those criteria translate into the practical arena of the foreign policy and diplomacy of Turkmenistan. Time has shown the relationship between the neutral status of Turkmenistan and the long-term goals of the United Nations and the development of States and peoples of the planet and the conditions of peace and security.

The foundation of the draft resolution under consideration today includes the real, practical results of the neutrality policy of Turkmenistan and examples of the effectiveness of the model of consistent active neutrality as a significant factor in international peacekeeping efforts. That was evidenced by the several rounds of negotiations, held in Ashgabat with the support of the United Nations, which have played a key role in achieving peace and agreements in Tajikistan. Notably, the capital of our neutral State hosted a dialogue to regulate the internal Afghan conflict at the end of the 1990s. Today, Ashgabat continues to highlight its readiness to hold further multilateral dialogues in Turkmenistan on issues of rapprochement, with a leading role for Afghanistan.

The United Nations considers Turkmenistan a true companion and effective partner in maintaining and supporting political stability in the region and the development of good-neighbourly relationships, friendship and cooperation. That was seen in the 2007 decision to open in Ashgabat the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. That decision was based on the need to make the peacekeeping efforts of the international community in Central Asia more systematic and to ensure that the strengthening of United Nations institutions. There was also an awareness of the importance of the neutrality model in foreign policy goals and international preventive diplomacy and in ensuring international peace and security at the regional and global levels. Within its mandate, the Centre is today the optimal platform for cooperation among our countries and the active involvement of international organizations in regional issues. Turkmenistan welcomes and fully supports the activities of the Centre.

The proposed draft resolution touches on the significantly organic link between economic, particularly geo-economic, aspects of the stable policy of neutrality and the issues of ensuring energy and transport security. Today, without ensuring strong international guarantees for transporting energy and fuel, we cannot speak of stable development of the global economy or a conflict-free secure process regionally or a predictable foreign policy course, for both separate States and groups of States. We have shown that a practice of joint economic trade and investment projects can smooth and neutralize the most acute foreign policy discords and serve as an effective measure of preventive diplomacy. The draft resolution largely focuses on qn understanding of neutrality through the prism of the national experience of Turkmenistan. However, the draft resolution also offers an opportunity to increase the knowledge of modern models of neutral policies. The draft resolution shows how neutral status supports more dynamic intergovernmental cooperation through Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality.

In paragraph 3, the draft resolution welcomes the decision of the Government of Turkmenistan to declare 2015 the Year of Neutrality and Peace. I wish to draw the Assembly's attention to the part of the paragraph indicating the decision to host in Ashgabat an international conference on the theme "Policy of neutrality: international cooperation for peace, security and development" in December 2015. We are certain

that the adoption of the draft resolution will raise the profile of the event and serve to increase the level of participation by world leaders, which would enable an increase in the current awareness of the potential of policies of neutrality in building sustainable peace.

On 12 December 2015, Turkmenistan will take stock of its 20 years of work since the recognition by the international community of our status as a permanently neutral State. Turkmenistan's neutrality is our reality today and it will remain so tomorrow. It opens up new opportunities for us to develop broader international partnerships in all areas, including, as a priority, enhanced multilevel cooperation with the United Nations.

We express our gratitude to the delegations of more than 50 countries that have co-sponsored the draft resolution and count on consensus in its adoption, as it is aimed at strengthening regional and international security and at building peace.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.70, entitled "Permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/69/L.70: Austria, Bangladesh, the Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, France, Georgia, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, the Niger, Poland, Slovakia, Somalia, Sweden, Uzbekistan, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.70?

Draft resolution A/69/L.70 was adopted (resolution 69/285).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 32.

Agenda item 33

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/909)

Draft resolution (A/69/L.69)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.69.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): Speaking under agenda item 33, entitled "Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development", I take the floor again this year to address a very important humanitarian issue for my country and to solicit the General Assembly's support for the draft resolution entitled "Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia", as contained in document A/69/L.69.

Since its first adoption, in 2008 (resolution 63/307), the resolution has drawn increasing international support due to its human appeal and humanitarian goals. In principle, each Member State's vote in favour is a vote in support of the fundamental humanitarian values based on the provisions of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, to which we all subscribe. Each vote sends a powerful signal to every displaced person in Georgia. In a country of 4.5 million, around 400,000 — 10 per cent of my country's population — have been forced to flee their homes and remain unable to return due to circumstances entirely beyond their control.

With this draft resolution, my Government aims to galvanize international support for our citizens of all ethnicities and religions expelled from the two Georgian regions of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. We reaffirm from this rostrum — and this very important platform — their right to a safe, dignified and voluntary return to their places of origin and their inalienable property rights.

We, as the international community, have a moral responsibility to come together and demonstrate our adherence to the humanitarian cause that transcends the case of a single country and is universal in nature. To our dismay, currently 50 million people are displaced

worldwide — the highest number recorded since the Second World War.

The plight of the Georgian internally displaced persons and refugees dates back to the early 1990s. They were forced to flee in search of security and safety. As the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs so expressively describes it, becoming a forcibly displaced person

> "does not just mean losing the roof over your head. It is about losing your connection to your family, to your source of income ... It is about losing access to the network of people around you who you would normally turn to in times of hardship."

Many of us have seen the same sentiments vividly expressed in the photo exhibition "A Story of Internal Displacement Captured on Camera", on a display just one flight down in this building. The exhibit's powerful images tell a story of my countrymen who left everything behind when they were forced to flee their homes. The Government of Georgia makes every effort to alleviate their burden and to ensure decent conditions for them, in accordance with our national strategy and its relevant action plan, and without prejudice to their unalienable right to a safe and dignified return.

The present draft resolution is not directed against any party, nor does it aim to point fingers at those responsible for forced displacement. Its primary focus on human rights is a deliberate choice to avoid political speculation when the fundamental rights of the displaced are at stake. The text of the draft resolution remains unchanged because its provisions remain unfulfilled. And for this very reason, we need this draft resolution as an important international legal instrument. The draft resolution itself and the reporting mechanism constitute indispensable instruments for the United Nations to remain seized of the matter.

As the draft resolution shows, its firm commitment to the Geneva international discussions — the forum mandated by the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement between Georgia and the Russian Federation to address security issues in Georgia — gives the necessary impetus to the participants to take immediate steps to realize in practical terms the draft resolution's main goals. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has also highlighted the fact that

> "the Geneva international discussions remain the only forum for relevant stakeholders to meet and address the issues identified in resolution 68/274."

Resolution 68/274 and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General (A/68/868) serve as the reference points in the Geneva international discussions and complement the work on humanitarian issues. I would reiterate that my Government is committed to peace talks and will remain engaged in the discussions in good faith to attain tangible results.

I would like now to briefly draw the Assembly's attention to the ongoing situation on the ground. The so-called integration treaties recently signed by the Russian Federation with the occupation regimes in Tskhinvali and Sukhumi undermine all principles of international law and further exacerbate the security and humanitarian situation. The large-scale installation of barbed wire and fences along the occupation line has intensified and already exceeds 60 kilometres. These artificial obstacles separate families and communities, significantly affect the livelihoods of the local population and prevent people-to-people contacts. Due to such restrictions on their freedom of movement, displaced people are not even allowed to visit the graves of their families during religious holidays. While there has been some progress in the provision of medical services, on a number of tragic occasions people seeking medical assistance have died en route to hospital when denied passage through the occupation line. For our part, we continue to remain committed to providing free medical care, as well as other Government services, to those residing in occupied territories.

It is particularly alarming that no international monitoring mechanisms are allowed inside the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions. Last year, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons were denied access to the occupied territories. This year, Mr. Juan E. Méndez, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, was also not allowed in.

When introducing this draft resolution every year, we leave politics aside and focus exclusively on the humanitarian dimension of the problem. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon rightfully reiterates in his 2015 report (A/69/909),

> "the right of return and its exercise by an internally displaced person cannot ... be directly linked to political questions or the conclusion of peace agreements. It is essential to recognize return as both a human right and a humanitarian issue that must be addressed irrespective of any solution to an underlying conflict." (*A/69/909, para. 45*)

We thank the Secretary-General for that reminder. In that light, I urge members once again to support the fundamental principle of the right of return and to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM) and its member States, namely, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The General Assembly has convened today to take action on draft resolution A/69/L.69, on protracted displacement in the GUAM area, specifically in Georgia where, for more than 20 years, hundreds of thousands of men, women and children have been unable to return to their homes. The GUAM member States stand together once again to present a united position and request members' support for the adoption of this purely humanitarian and non-political draft resolution.

States Members of the United Nations are well aware of the humane goals of the draft resolution before us, which the General Assembly has adopted annually since May 2008. Every year, we see a growing number of supporters. The message behind each vote stands for increased attention to, and solidarity with, each and every Georgian citizen forcibly displaced from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, since the early 1990s. Support for the draft resolution is rooted in our shared and long-standing commitment to fundamental humanitarian principles, including the right to return, property rights and humanitarian access to the affected regions.

Since the adoption of last year's resolution 68/274, the situation on the ground has deteriorated due to additional impediments to the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to their homes. Our particular concern remains the continued installation of barbed-wire fences along the occupation line inside Georgia, as well as continued unlawful detentions and obstacles to the freedom of movement. The total length of barbed-wire fencing along the occupation line has now reached 60 kilometres, and the process is ongoing. Those artificial obstacles rip families and communities apart and restrict people-to-people contacts, in violation of their civil, social, economic and cultural rights. Local residents are prevented from cultivating their agricultural lands, visiting religious sites, accessing cemeteries and obtaining emergency medical services. As a result, the local population is compelled to leave its places of residence, which threatens to create a new wave of forcible displacements.

The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that international humanitarian organizations are continuously denied access to the occupied territories. In 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights visited Georgia. When she was not allowed into those two regions of Georgia, she concluded that the Tskhinvali region remained a black hole and "one of the most inaccessible places on Earth, with no access permitted for international agencies". The States members of GUAM believe that it is paramount to redouble our efforts to implement the call of today's draft resolution for unimpeded access by humanitarian actors to the displaced population and those living in the conflict-affected areas.

Moreover, GUAM member States firmly believe that the humanitarian concerns of the affected population, including internally displaced persons, should be a priority in the present situation, and that that issue must be addressed regardless of the political disagreements between the actors involved. In that context, GUAM appreciates Georgia's strategy for engagement through cooperation, which aims at building trust and confidence among divided communities. GUAM therefore reiterates its strong support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

The States members of GUAM also reiterate their firm support for peaceful negotiations. We believe that the Geneva international discussions are an important platform for addressing security, humanitarian and other challenges, as the Secretary-General himself puts it in his most recent report (A/69/909), dated 20 May 2015. In that regard, we view the draft resolution as an important tool for reaffirming international support to the Geneva international discussions. The draft resolution encourages the Geneva participants to redouble their efforts to ensure respect for human rights and address the issues under their respective mandates. Therefore, we strongly disagree with any attempt to mislead the international community by characterizing

the draft resolution as politicized or as hindering the process of the Geneva talks. We appreciate the role of the United Nations as one of the co-chairs of the Geneva international discussions. We also stress the relevance of the Secretary-General's annual reports pursuant to General Assembly resolutions as a viable instrument for maintaining the international community's much-needed involvement in, and attention to, the issue of the displaced.

The issue of forced displacement has been a long-standing one in the GUAM region. Recently, that problem has acquired new and daunting dimensions as a result of the aggression against Ukraine. As of now, the number of IDPs in Ukraine stands at over 1.2 million. The large-scale displacements in Ukraine intensify the magnitude of the region's growing humanitarian needs and make the international community's response even more urgent.

Taking into account all the preceding arguments, and bearing in mind the humanitarian goals of the draft resolution before us, including to secure the right of safe and dignified return for IDPs and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, GUAM member States will vote in favour of draft resolution A/69/L.69 and urge members of the Assembly to do the same.

Mrs. Jakubonė (Lithuania): It is an honour for me to speak today on behalf of the Baltic and Nordic States, namely, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Lithuania. Poland associates itself with this statement.

The number of internally displaced persons in the world remains alarmingly high, with more and more people forced to flee their homes by armed conflicts, violence and human rights violations. We call on the international community to continue seeking sustainable solutions for displaced persons and to guarantee the protection of their rights under the provisions of international law.

The difficult situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees from Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, has been known to the international community for a long time, but so far no substantial progress has been achieved with regard to their right to a safe, dignified and voluntary return to their places of origin. The problem has been further deepened by activities of the foreign security forces in control of the occupied regions, which continue installing barbed-wire fences and other obstacles along the administrative boundary lines in Georgia. Those actions compromise Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty and have a grave impact on the freedom of movement and other basic human rights of the local population. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

We fully share and support the objectives of the draft resolution: the recognition of the right of all refugees and IDPs to return to their homes in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region; respect for the property rights of those persons; the prohibition of forced demographic changes; humanitarian access for all IDPs, refugees and other persons living within the conflict affected area; a call on the participants in the Geneva talks to establish favourable security conditions, conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and unimpeded return of IDPs; the development of a timetable for their return; and a request to the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the draft resolution at the next session of the General Assembly.

The broad and recurring support for the draft resolution — now for the eighth consecutive year — demonstrates the importance that the international community attaches to this issue. It serves also as a signal to the displaced that they are not forgotten and that the international community will remain committed in its active support for their plight.

Mr. Shearman (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom looks forward to the adoption of draft resolution A/69/L.69, on the status of internally displaced persons and refugees from the Georgian provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The draft resolution reaffirms the unalienable right of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to return to their homes. This must be done in a safe and dignified manner, regardless of their ethnic origin. As this is a humanitarian and human rights issue, we should not allow wider political issues affecting the region to obscure this undisputed right of return.

The need is great. There are over a quarter of a million registered IDPs in Georgia. Many live in difficult and vulnerable conditions, with poor housing and limited access to basic services. As they await their return, they face daily challenges, whether in

integrating into local communities or from their lack of property rights. It is therefore important that the General Assembly send a clear and united message to the IDPs and refugees in the region. We cannot forget them. We will continue to call for their return home.

We welcome the Government of Georgia's efforts to help improve the situation of IDPs. The publication this week of the first quarterly report (A/69/909) documenting the human rights situation in the breakaway territories is a positive development. It is also important that national and international legislation be implemented effectively to help and protect the lives of IDPs. In this context, we call on Russia to stop borderization activities on the administrative boundary lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These activities are both a direct impediment to the return of Georgian IDPs and in flagrant disregard of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia. Furthermore, we call on the de facto authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia to allow access to humanitarian agencies, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Let me conclude by stressing the importance of the draft resolution before us today. We must also recognize that it will be actions from the region, and not words in New York, that will determine progress on this issue. We hope that all sides, including Russia and Georgia, will use the Geneva international discussions as the forum to discuss and make progress on this issue. Such progress is long overdue.

Mr. Rishchynski (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Our delegation thanks you, Madam, for the opportunity to speak on an issue of importance to our country and Government.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada takes an active role in promoting the rights and well-being of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and we are committed to continuing to work with the international community to address both long-standing and emerging protection challenges. Addressing internal displacement is a critical element of the United Nations mandate and is central to its work on the protection of civilians.

(*spoke in French*)

At a time when the number of displaced persons worldwide is at a record high, international commitment to fulfilling its moral and legal obligations to protect civilians and ensure respect for international law is vital. Equally important is responding efficiently and effectively to the protection and assistance needs of displaced persons and refugees. The guiding principles on internal displacement, the key international framework for the protection of IDPs, provide a critical advocacy and monitoring structure for the assistance and protection needs of IDPs.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada supports the call in draft resolution A/69/L.69 for unimpeded access for humanitarian activities to internally displaced persons and refugees in all conflict-affected areas in Georgia. We also support calls for all participants in the Geneva discussions to intensify their efforts to establish a durable peace, commit to enhanced confidence-building measures and create favourable security conditions for the voluntary, safe and unhindered return of all internally displaced persons and refugees to their homes.

Canada continues to support Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. Canada views the so-called partnership treaties signed between the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia with the Russian Federation as both illegal and illegitimate, and we call on the Russian Federation to put an end to its various negative interferences in the region, to abide by fundamental principles of international law and to fully respect its Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe commitments, in particular the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement and its implementing measures of 8 September 2008.

Canada also strongly condemns Russia's aggression in Crimea and the eastern regions of Ukraine. The latest violation of a sovereign nation's territorial integrity only further demonstrates Russia's disregard for international rule of law.

Sustainable solutions to conflicts must include respect for the human rights of all individuals, regardless of ethnic descent, faith or sexual orientation. Canada will continue to work with other like-minded countries and international organizations to ensure that those forcibly displaced are able to exercise those fundamental rights, and we call on all Member States to support the draft resolution under consideration this morning.

Mr. Minah (Sierra Leone): Our position is informed by a recognition of internationally recognized norms,

the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the rights of internally displaced persons. We see our vote here today not as a vote against any of the parties involved, but a vote for principle. We call on all those who believe in the peaceful resolution of international disputes to lend their good offices to the Geneva process and ensure that internally displaced persons enjoy our full consideration.

As I have said before, we act out of principle, and not out of partisan political considerations. Even though the internally displaced persons are far from our shores we do identify with them. Therefore, we call on all delegations to consider the draft resolution before us (A/69/L.69), which we believe is measured and concise and acts accordingly in the furtherance of the Charter and internationally recognized norms.

The Acting President: We have now heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Zagaynov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The draft resolution (A/69/L.69) before the General Assembly has not undergone any changes compared to last year's text (resolution 68/274). This initiative is politicized and opportunistic in nature. The Georgian delegation, as it has done in the past, is using this theme and its humanitarian character to promote its approach to the situation in the region and its own perspectives. Contrary to reality and the will of the peoples of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Georgia's draft resolution again contains the thesis that these independent sovereign States belong to Georgia.

Security is of key importance to the return of internally displaced persons and refugees. Georgia's persistent refusal to conclude legally binding agreements with the South Ossetian and Abkhaz sides on the non-use of force in no way contributes to creating conditions for the safe return of refugees to the region. After all, it was the actions of Tbilisi, having undertaken the massive use of armed force against South Ossetia, that led to the 2008 conflict. Against this background, the appeal reiterated in the draft resolution to the participants of the Geneva discussions to intensify their efforts to establish peace and to agree to more effective confidence-building measures looks insincere, to put it mildly.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/69/909) notes the importance of the Geneva talks as a forum for the parties to discuss issues of security, stability, humanitarian aspects, and the efforts made in this regard. Unfortunately, no progress has been achieved on the issue of the return of refugees because Georgia's approach is to block the considerartion of this topic in Geneva and to bring it before the General Assembly. In March in Geneva, the representatives of South Ossetia and Abkhazia confirmed their position of not participating in the discussion of refugee problems in Geneva until Georgia ends its artificial politicization of this humanitarian topic in the General Assembly.

It is clear to us that the discussion of this topic in New York without the participation of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian sides is pointless. The Georgian delegation is well aware of the position of Sukhumi and Tskhinvali, but stubbornly persists in the line it chose several years ago, which is aimed not at seeking real solutions to the problems, but at confrontation and achieving a propagandistic impact. The proposed draft in no way contributes to the practical consideration of the specific tasks to alleviate the humanitarian situation for the people who were forced to flee from their homes.

We have long held no doubt about the counterproductive nature of the Georgian initiative, which threatens to further stall the difficult negotiations in the Geneva discussions. We are convinced that it is not in line with current realities, will not improve the situation in the region, including in solving humanitarian issues, and will not facilitate the establishment of trust between the Abkhazian, South Ossetian and Georgian sides, which is a key condition for solving the problems of refugees.

In the light of all this, the delegation of the Russian Federation requests a recorded vote on draft resolution A/69/L.69 and will vote against it. We also urge other States to refrain from supporting the draft resolution for the reasons I have cited.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.69, entitled "Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/ South Ossetia, Georgia".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Armenia, Belarus, Burundi, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Myanmar, Nauru, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu

[Subsequently, the delegation of Austria informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

Draft resolution A/69/L.69 was adopted by 75 votes to 16, with 78 abstentions (resolution 69/286).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil): Brazil has maintained a consistent stance of abstaining in the voting on on the text adopted today (resolution 69/286), as we believe that it can prejudge or influence the consideration of sensitive issues that should be resolved by the relevant negotiations in Geneva. We acknowledge the pressures arising from the substantial number of persons displaced and made refugees since the 2008 conflict. The parties concerned should create favourable political conditions for their return and dispel fears of conflict resumption. We also urge all actors to seek lasting solutions to the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees, bearing in mind their right of return.

Brazil recognizes the territorial integrity of Georgia and expects that the dispute between Georgia and Russia can be resolved peacefully and through dialogue in the shortest term. In that sense, we believe that confidence-building measures and initiatives to foster cooperation should be pursued by all parties, including in the framework of the Geneva process.

Mr. Ceriani (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay is a country that has considerable domestic and international experience in the promotion, protection and defence of human rights and international humanitarian law. Adherence to international law and to the principles of peaceful coexistence and territorial integrity has been a priority of our foreign policy. In that respect, we believe that it is important to ensure that the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur for internally displaced persons enjoy immediate access to regions where emergency situations are unfolding, and contribute to identifying solutions for displaced persons and facilitating their return.

Furthermore, we believe it essential to foster conditions that enable them to correctly assess the

humanitarian situation of the population in the region and guarantee secure and uninterrupted access by humanitarian actors to that region. We believe that all parties involved must — in all situations and in an impartial and consistent manner — preserve, strengthen and respect the norms of international humanitarian law, which constitute the foundation for the protection of civilians.

Uruguay considers it important to continue the discussions in Geneva to find a solution to security and stability issues and to the humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons and refugees in the region, and trusts that those deliberations will conclude at the earliest opportunity with a positive result for the people affected, providing conditions for their voluntary return to their homes and respecting their human rights without discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. Uruguay attributes the highest priority to the discussions and encourages the parties to make the greatest effort possible to ensure their success. My delegation therefore believed that it was appropriate to vote in favour of resolution 69/286.

Ms. Shilo (Israel): Israel welcomes the steps that the Government of Georgia has taken to implement the strategy on internally displaced persons outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/909). The strategy has brought about a marked improvement in the humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons in different areas, such as housing and integration. Israel is encouraged by the action plan and the implementation of the strategy for 2012-2014. Israel also views positively Georgia's programme of engagement through cooperation, which aims to build trust and confidence among divided communities.

Israel supports the spirit of reconciliation through direct dialogue promoted by the Georgian Government. Israel would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its support for and recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity. Israel does not support or recognize the unilateral declarations of independence by Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We reiterate our well-established position that the way to resolve long-standing conflicts is through a negotiated, mutually agreed upon approach, not through unilateral actions.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I give the floor to the representative of Georgia to make a statement.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): I want to thank the General Assembly and all delegations that once again voted in favour of humanitarian principles and helped us uphold the Charter of the United Nations. The numbers of internally displaced persons have been mentioned several times. They are not just statistics; behind every number there is a human life. I therefore thank members once more for taking into due consideration the fact that lives are at stake and for upholding the Charter.

The Acting President: May I take it that is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 33?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 74 (*continued*)

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft resolution (A/69/L.65)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 74 and its sub-items (a) and (b), and adopted resolution 69/109 at its 67th plenary meeting, on 9 December 2014. Members will also recall that, under agenda item 74 (a), the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/245 at its 76th plenary meeting, on 29 December 2014.

I give the floor to the representative of Trinidad and Tobago to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.65.

Mr. Charles (Trinidad and Tobago): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.65, entitled "Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction".

The draft resolution represents a combination of the work of two rounds of informal consultations, two rounds of exploratory discussions and the work of small groups, all based on the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group regarding the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the Convention, in accordance with paragraph 214 of resolution 69/245.

It will be recalled that the Working Group's mandate was established by resolution 66/231, and the outcome of resolution 67/78 relating to the preparation of a decision

on the development of an international instrument under the Convention on the Law of the Sea to be taken at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. At the same time, during the negotiations that resulted in the conclusion of the document before us this morning, delegations were cognizant of the political commitment made by Heads of State and Government in paragraph 162 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want" (resolution 66/288).

It should also be noted that the commitment made at the Conference was endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 66/288, of 27 July 2012, which called for action to be taken on an urgent basis, building on the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group, to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

Today's introduction of draft resolution A/69/L.65 marks another important phase as the General Assembly seeks to put in place measures to develop an international legally binding instrument under the Convention with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. It would be remiss of me not to compliment delegations for their commitment and diligence, which resulted in agreement by consensus on the text now under consideration.

The draft resolution, among other things, establishes a preparatory process to lay the foundation for the convening of an intergovernmental conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the preparatory committee on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

An examination of the document will also show that agreement was reached for the preparatory committee to convene in 2016 and 2017, as detailed in paragraph 1 (b) of the draft resolution. With respect to paragraph 1 (i), the understanding is that the elements where consensus is not attained, even after exhausting every effort, will be presented in a separate section of the report that the preparatory committee will transmit to the General Assembly. Paragraph 2 of the draft text emphasizes the point that delegations were determined to build on previous work on the subject and, as such, the draft resolution would decide that

> "negotiations shall address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology".

The informal negotiations also showed that delegations were of the view that there should be widespread participation in the deliberations of all Member States, be they developing or developed countries, as a result of the tremendous importance delegations attach to the work of the preparatory committee and the eventual convening of the international conference for the conclusion of an international agreement on the subject. As a result, paragraph 5 of the draft resolution would request

> "the Secretary-General to establish a special voluntary trust fund for the purpose of assisting developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, land-locked developing countries and small island developing States, in attending the meetings of the preparatory committee and the intergovernmental conference referred to in paragraph 1 (a)"

of the draft resolution. It goes on to invite Member States, international financial institutions, donor agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-Governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make financial contributions to the voluntary trust fund. The emphasis is to ensure that no one is left out.

Delegations were also quite aware of the need for the provision of the requisite resources to enable the preparatory committee to perform its tasks, and therefore paragraph 6 is important to note.

The work of the informal consultations would not have been possible without the expert assistance provided by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and other units of the Secretariat, which provided the coordinator with advice when needed. At this juncture, I also wish to thank all delegations that have sponsored the draft resolution to date. It is

my sincere hope that when the General Assembly takes action on this particular topic, the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, which will be consistent and which will have characterized all deliberations on the question of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction since this item was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly.

The Acting President: I wish to inform members that action on draft resolution A/69/L.65 is postponed to a later date, to be announced, in order to provide additional time for the Secretariat to inform the Assembly on the programme budgetary implications of the proposal, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 74.

The meeting rose at noon.

United Nations A/69/PV.93

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

93rd plenary meeting
Monday, 8 June 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Al-Mughairy (Oman), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 112 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(e) Election of members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (A/69/920)

The Acting President: I would like to draw the attention of members to document A/69/920, in which the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations informs the President of the General Assembly that, according to the agreement among the members of the Group of Eastern European States to rotate their membership in the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law among themselves, Georgia will relinquish its seat in favour of the Czech Republic on the last day prior to the beginning of the forty-eighth session of the Commission, in July 2015. As a result, a vacancy will occur and a new member must therefore be elected to fill the unexpired term of office of Georgia that commenced in June 2011, the first day of the forty-fourth session of the Commission.

As the Assembly is aware, in accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, all elections shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare the Czech Republic elected as a member of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law for a term of office beginning on the first day of the forty-eighth session of the Commission, in July 2015, and expiring on the last day prior to the beginning of the forty-ninth session of the Commission, in 2016?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda items 52 and 118.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I shall take it that General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that when the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in the plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in the plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee.

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committee unless notified otherwise in advance.

Agenda item 52 (*continued*)

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/69/455/Add.1)

The Acting President: The General Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/69/455/Add.1. The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution.

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/287).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 52?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 118 (*continued*)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/69/463/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 4 of its report contained in document A/69/453/Add.1. The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision.

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 69/525 B).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 19 at its 75th plenary meeting, on 19 December 2014. In order for the Assembly to take action on the draft resolution before it, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of the sub-item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 19?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Members will furthermore recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2014, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (b) of agenda item 19 to the Second Committee. To enable the General Assembly to take

action expeditiously on the document, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider sub-item (b) of agenda item 19 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 19 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Draft resolution (A/69/L.73)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.73.

Mr. Malawane (South Africa): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.73, entitled "Comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States".

The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway (Samoa Pathway) laid the foundation for a comprehensive review by tasking the Joint Inspection Unit with defining the parameters for implementing the review. Consequently, the Joint Inspection Unit report on the matter (JIU/REP/2015/2), which was published in March 2015, contains six such parameters. The time is now ripe to launch the full review, based on those parameters, in order to improve the United Nations system support for small island developing States. As envisioned in the Samoa Pathway and reaffirmed in last year's resolution on small island developing States (resolution 68/238), the initial findings would be included in the upcoming report of the Secretary-General to the seventieth session. The report in full would be published later in the same session as an annex to the report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the two facilitators of the draft resolution for bringing the informal consultations to a speedy conclusion. I would also like to express my appreciation to all delegations for their constructive engagement during the consideration of the draft resolution, as well as to the Secretariat, for their assistance.

In conclusion, I commend draft resolution A/69/L.73 to the General Assembly for adoption by consensus.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/69/L.73.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.73, entitled "Comprehensive review of United Nations system support for small island developing States".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.73?

*Draft resolution A/69/L.73 was adopted (*resolution 69/288*).*

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 19.

Agenda item 10

Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS

Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/856)

The Acting President: I am pleased to participate in this meeting and deliver this statement on behalf of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa. I thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report entitled "Future of the AIDS response: building on past achievements and accelerating progress to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030".

This meeting comes at a critical juncture as the international community approaches the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is now in the final stages of negotiations to define a universal, transformative and ambitious post-2015 development agenda.

The Secretary-General's report demonstrates that the global AIDS response has been highly successful in reversing, and in some cases even stopping, the spread of HIV/AIDS, in line with MDG Target 6 and the ambitious targets set out in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS (resolution 65/277, annex).

New HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths are falling globally. Risk-taking behaviour has been reduced, while access to lifesaving antiretroviral therapy has vastly improved and mother-to-child transmission rates are dropping. Through these and other important developments, millions of lives have been saved.

Despite these important accomplishments, we must not be complacent. Worldwide, 2.1 million people became newly infected with HIV in 2013 and 1.6 million people lost their lives to the disease. Today, of the 36 million people living with HIV, 19 million do not know they are infected. Social and econonomic inequality and gender-based violence continue to place women and girls at an unacceptably high risk of infection. HIV is the leading cause of death globally among women of reproductive age, and stigma and discrimination against people living with or at a higher risk of HIV infection persist.

Given these realities, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has developed fast-track targets to ensure that, by 2020, 90 per cent of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, 90 per cent of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy, and 90 per cent of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will achieve viral suppression. Increased resources and investment, global solidarity, shared responsibility and an inclusive, people-centred, human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach will be necessary to achieve these objectives.

As we work this year to put in place the future development agenda along with adequate means of implementation, I welcome the target to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 set forth in the proposed sustainable development goals (SDGs). Progress in the AIDS response is closely intertwined with other objectives outlined in the SDGs, including targets related to health, gender equality, human rights, and development as a whole. Significant value lies in the lessons learned from the global AIDS response and the UNAIDS approach as we seek to deliver a post-2015 development agenda that is truly transformative.

As it has had to address complex challenges, the AIDS response has reaffirmed the value of multisectoral approaches, inclusive governance and partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders. Our response to HIV and AIDS has demonstrated that much can be achieved through collective action and adequate resourcing. We should take the important lessons learned and seek to implement similar approaches across the post-2015 development agenda.

I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Poulsen (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

We welcome the comprehensive and balanced report of the Secretary-General entitled "Future of the AIDS response: building on past achievements and accelerating progress to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030" (A/69/856). The report underlines some of the remarkable achievements of the global AIDS response in reducing HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths.

However, much remains to be done. Several of the key targets and goals that we set for 2015 may not be reached. The fight against AIDS will remain an urgent global health and development challenge in the post-2015 development agenda. The report concludes that intensified efforts are needed to build upon the achievements already made and ensure that the global goal of ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030 can be realized.

At the country level, there is a need to invest strategically in evidence-based and tailored responses developed in collaboration with all the relevant stakeholders — including people living with HIV/AIDS, key populations and civil society — to ensure that resources and programming are targeted and responsive to needs and that the relevant health services are accessible for key populations, including hard-to-reach and marginalized groups, while remaining available in locations and for populations where a rise in new infections has been observed.

We fully agree that the goal of zero discrimination must be rigorously pursued. National responses must support human rights-based initiatives and address human rights challenges such as discrimination, including of women and girls, who are particularly vulnerable and at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS, and the stigmatization of key populations together with restrictions and punitive approaches towards key populations.

As countries develop economically, they should increasingly take over the financing of their HIV/AIDS programmes. We welcome the increased efforts of low- and middle-income countries to reduce their dependence on international funding. We encourage the leveraging of domestic resources, not only for HIV/AIDS but for the health sector in general. In that regard, we would like to remind Governments to urgently and significantly scale up their efforts to accelerate the

transition towards universal access to affordable and quality health-care services.

We look forward to the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS to be held in 2016 and to broader strategic discussions on HIV/AIDS activities in the context of a thorough health-system-strengthening approach in the post-2015 era.

Ms. Derderian (United States of America): The United States commends the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and partner Governments on the tremendous progress outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS (A/69/856).

It is critical for all partners to continue to fast-track the fight against HIV/AIDS. We must accelerate our investments and focus on effective interventions where they are needed most. The United States strongly supports the UNAIDS fast-track 90-90-90 global targets described in the report of the Secretary-General, and we have made them an essential part of the United States-funded programmes.

President Obama is committed to partnering with countries to control the epidemic and ensure that no one is left behind. The United States displays this commitment by increasingly focusing on data, mutual accountability and transparency to implement evidence-based prevention, treatment and care interventions that directly contribute to controlling the epidemic.

We applaud UNAIDS for its analytic and advocacy efforts that have encouraged us to focus the right interventions in the countries, cities and communities where the burden of HIV/AIDS is greatest. To reach the 90-90-90 global targets, the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) takes a data-driven approach in order to strategically target geographic areas and populations where we can achieve the most impact for our investments. For PEPFAR that means targeting effective prevention measures to reach neglected and hard-to-reach populations, such as adolescent girls, as well as key populations, including men who have sex with men, transgender people, female sex workers and people who inject drugs. The United States is particularly concerned about addressing the needs of girls and young women while continuing to expand treatment with children. Through partnerships, we have worked to double the number of children receiving life-saving antiretroviral treatment in 10 African countries, and will enable 300,000 more children living with HIV to receive such treatment.

Continued global solidarity coupled with an increasing shared responsibility and strategic investment, as defined by the 90-90-90 global targets, can put us on a trajectory to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The United States encourages all Governments to redouble the intensity of the fight to control HIV/AIDS as they plan and implement the post-2015 development agenda. The United States commitment to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic is unwavering. Compassion and impact demand that we focus our efforts where the burden of HIV/AIDS is greatest, and ensure that all people in the hardest-hit countries cities and communities have access to services that allow them to survive, thrive and fulfil their dreams.

Mrs. Natividad (Philippines): We thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/69/856). The Philippines is one of the countries that has seen a rise in the number of HIV infections. In February 2015, there were 646 new HIV cases reported — the highest since the first case was diagnosed, in 1984. That translates into 20 cases diagnosed per day for 2015, as compared with 17 per day in 2014 and 9 per day in 2012. From January 1984 to February 2015, there were 23,709 diagnosed HIV cases, 81 per cent of which have been reported in the past five years alone. Most of the cases — 96 per cent — were male and the median age was 28 years.

The Philippines is committed to combating the rise of HIV/AIDS cases. The budget of our Department of Health national HIV/sexually transmitted infection prevention programme has been increased to approximately $11.24 million. Recognizing that addressing the threat of HIV/AIDS requires a multifaceted approach, the Department of Health is currently carrying out behavioural, biomedical and structural interventions to control HIV infections among key affected populations. For instance, a module on HIV/AIDS is now part of the predeparture orientation seminar for all Government personnel and Filipino migrants.

On the legislative side, several bills amending the Philippines AIDS Prevention and Control Act of 1998 are now under consideration by our Congress and Senate, to harmonize that Act with evidence, informed

strategies and approaches on prevention, treatment, care and support. Critical to the fight against HIV/AIDS is the advocacy of, and corresponding funding, provided by local governments. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in the Philippines has been very strong in that regard. It is important, however, that interventions and campaigns at the level of local governments be coordinated with national Government initiatives.

Consistent with the post-2015 developed agenda, we are also strengthening our health system as a whole, in particular by expanding the reach of our universal health-care programme. Given that may basic knowledge on HIV among key affected populations is only 32 per cent, widespread and intensive information campaigns, including through faith-based initiatives and the active participation of those most at risk, are essential and are an integral focus of our people-centred strategy.

The Philippines Government recognizes that time is of the essence in the fight against HIV/AIDS. If we are to end the AIDS epidemic as a public threat within the next 15 years, continued international support is necessary, in line with the principles of global solidarity, shared responsibility and good governance.

Mrs. Ntaba (Zimbabwe): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 15 member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The SADC member States align themselves with the statement to be delivered by the delegation of Rwanda on behalf of the African Group. The Group thanks the Secretary-General for his report (A/69/856) submitted under this agenda item.

SADC member States are gratified to be part of the statistics that speak to the progress that has been achieved in reducing HIV infection rates and expanding access to antiretroviral therapy, particularly in the hardest-hit regions and countries. The SADC region is one of the regions that has experienced the ravages of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. High prevalence rates reversed decades of social and economic progress in our region and weakened our health systems.

Against that background, SADC member States adopted a collaborative approach to combat the spread of HIV and AIDS in the region and its deleterious effects on social and economic development of the region. The SADC regional response to the HIV epidemic was guided by the SADC HIV and AIDS Strategic Framework.

The region also witnessed an unprecedented rise in the proportion of orphaned children, largely stemming from the ravages of HIV and AIDS. As a result of a combination of high poverty levels and high morbidity among the adult population, many of those children ended up either under the care of elderly grandparents or being part of child-headed households. That situation led the development of the region's strategic framework on orphans and vulnerable children, which has guided national initiatives on ensuring comprehensive support for that vulnerable group of children.

In addressing the HIV and AIDS epidemic, SADC member States have adopted a multifaceted approach in recognition of the fact that no one model on its own can yield sustainable results. Among other initiatives and programmes, SADC member States have promoted abstinence, as well as prevention and protection by encouraging condom use and distribution, implementing behaviour modification programmes, increasing HIV testing and counselling and promoting medically safe circumcisions. Individual countries have also taken unprecedented steps to mainstream efforts to combat HIV and AIDS across all sectors, expand treatment for people living with HIV and increase support for home-based care.

A number of important lessons have been learned in the fight against the HIV epidemic. We have seen an unprecedented mobilization of international cooperation with a view to reducing the prevalence of HIV, notably under the auspices of the Global Fund. That has given rise to a well-coordinated system to address HIV. In a number of countries, the spillover effects of the HIV response have had a positive impact on national responses to other diseases. However, we must be careful to make sure that the lessons learned from the HIV response are deliberately used to strengthen health systems in a comprehensive manner so as to increase their resilience and ensure that they effectively address the general health needs of the population.

SADC member States are deeply concerned by the findings set forth in the Secretary-General's report regarding the lack of access to treatment for adolescents. Indeed, various SADC member States have gleaned similar information through their statistical data regarding access to treatment by children and

adolescents. We call for increased international cooperation in this area, including in initiating collaborative approaches to research into paediatric antiretroviral therapy. The HIV response can never be labeled as a success if children continue to receive insufficient access to treatment.

Much has been said about the need for countries to know their epidemic in order to better respond to it and to ensure that the gains recorded are not reversed. We emphasize that the drivers of the HIV/AIDS epidemic differ in various settings, and therefore each country should have the flexibility to tailor its intervention to the specificities of its situation. We reiterate that there is no one-size-fits-all response.

In the SADC region, the epidemic has disproportionately affected women and girls. Accordingly, the region has paid significant attention to the linkages between the status of women and HIV/AIDS. Current data has shown that women and young girls continue to experience higher rates of infection. It is therefore important that we expand proven prevention programmes to target these vulnerable groups. Some of these proven initiatives include delaying sexual debut among young people, amplifying HIV/AIDS prevention education and education on sexual and reproductive health, and expanding counselling and testing facilities. In addressing HIV among young people, we must increasingly attend to the needs of early beneficiaries of life-prolonging antiretroviral therapy who are now entering adolescence and require counselling and support about living with HIV/AIDS.

The issues we have just outlined require concerted cooperation if we are to address them successfully. We have seen unprecedented global partnership and international cooperation in the HIV/AIDS response and we cannot afford to slacken or reduce our momentum at such a critical time. If we are to reach our goals of ending HIV/AIDS, we must ensure that international assistance is sustained and possibly increased to assist those countries that do not have the domestic capacity to cope with the demands of containing the epidemic. As we conclude, we call on all stakeholders and partners to take decisive action to ensure that we do not lose the gains we have made to date in the global HIV/AIDS response.

Mr. Ansari Dogaheh (Islamic Republic of Iran): Fifteen years ago, when the red ribbon was placed at the centre of Millennium Development Goal 6, a ray of hope captured the hearts of people across the globe who had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. Through coordinated efforts with the aim and hope of halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by the target year 2015, the international community has come a long way. The 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS (resolution 60/262, annex) set 10 priority targets and commitments to ensure universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support by 2015. In 2011, the General Assembly adopted the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS (resolution 65/277, annex).

Despite significant global progress, as elaborated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/856), emerging gaps and challenges still have to be addressed by the international community. The Islamic Republic of Iran, through its robust commitment to addressing the challenges of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and in implementing the Political Declaration, has rapidly developed HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment measures at the national level. We have recently developed our third national strategic plan with a concentration on three major targets: zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero HIV-related deaths.

The Iranian Ministry of Health and Medical Education submitted its fifth national progress report on HIV/AIDS to UNAIDS in 2014. The five national reports we have submitted clearly show that Iran promotes a participatory and proactive approach by all programme partners in controlling the epidemic while seeking to advance a common strategic vision rooted in the "three ones" concept: one strategic programme, one coordinating institution and one monitoring and evaluation framework that is used by all partners to gauge their interventions.

Tens of non-governmental organizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran are active in a wide variety of activities, from awareness-raising to running drop-in centres and outreach teams. Every year, 10 non-governmental organizations from around the world are selected to receive Red Ribbon Awards from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and in 2012 and 2014 Iranian non-governmental organizations received Red Ribbon Awards for their outstanding community leadership on AIDS.

All people living with HIV/AIDS in Iran enjoy free health insurance coverage. Furthermore, the Government has established triangular clinics to provide HIV-positive injection drug users with methadone

maintenance treatment programmes and antiretroviral therapy. The services have also been scaled up to all provinces of the country to bring about universal access. At the community level, hotline services, group educators, training of trainers, home-care services, family education, positive prevention strategy services for post-test clubs, and counselling and harm-reduction services for vulnerable women are provided among all other relevant services. All these facilities, which provide their services confidentially and free of charge, have led to a decrease in the number of new cases and an increase in society's awareness on issues relating to HIV/AIDS.

It should be noted that these services have been provided despite the illegal and unfair sanctions in place against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The sanctions have made more difficult the task of ensuring universal access, which needs a combination of increased and predictable funding and an effective response to diverse and evolving epidemics based on nation contexts and circumstances.

We are of the opinion that the family and the promotion of family ethics play a vital role in achieving the targets stipulated in the Political Declaration. By educating family members while upholding ethics and morality that help prevent HIV/AIDS, we can reduce the stigma and improve prevention and treatment across the board.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran remains robustly committed to the global efforts to work towards reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, ensuring universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS patients and preventing any related deaths.

Mr. Mohamed (Guyana): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) at this plenary meeting to review the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (resolution S-26/2, annex) and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS (resolution 60/262, annex).

I would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/69/856.

CARICOM takes note of the extraordinary gains made in the global AIDS response since 2000, which has resulted in a decrease of the number of new infections and AIDS-related deaths in 2015. We concur with the report's findings that the work required to end the epidemic is far from over, and that intensified efforts will be needed to build on the impressive gains of the past.

It is important to recognize that the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the sustainable development goals is upon us and that several of the MDGs, especially those related to health and HIV, will not be achieved. We were pleased to note that a commitment to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 was included, as part of Target 3.3, in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970). The transition also means that the existing AIDS-related commitments and goals identified in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS (resolution 65/277, annex), to which this component of the General Assembly is dedicated, must be reconfigured and redirected to the goals of defeating AIDS and advancing global health, the theme of the soon-to-be-released report of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and Lancet Commission.

I am pleased to be able to report on the significant progress that has been made in the Caribbean towards achieving the goals of the Assembly's 2011 high-level meeting on the Political Declaration (see A/65/PV.95). Indeed, that achievement is associated with a number of factors. They include the region's trend towards becoming the first in the world to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV; a 52 per cent decline between 2001 and 2012 in HIV infections among children, owing to the fact that 90 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV are receiving services to prevent mother-to-child-transmission; a 49 per cent decline in overall HIV incidence over the past decade; a rate of HIV prevalence that fell from 1.5 per cent in 2002 to 1.0 percent in 2012; the availability of antiretroviral treatment to 70 per cent of those eligible, resulting in a major reduction in deaths due to AIDS and an improved quality of life for people living with HIV; a lower prevalence of HIV among female sex workers in several Caribbean countries; strengthened health systems and scaled-up prevention, treatment, care and support services; substantial returns on investments from internal and external sources; and the provision of regional public goods and services, creating more affordable access to medicines and shared capacity in key areas.

Despite the overall gains, considerable challenges remain. The Caribbean has a mixed HIV epidemic, consisting of a low-level HIV-prevalence generalized

epidemic in the adult population and an unacceptably high hyper-epidemic among vulnerable and marginalized populations, including in particular men who have sex with men. A more recent disturbing trend is a spike in prevalence among young women, which may also be related to high reported levels of domestic violence and other forms of sexual abuse of Caribbean women.

Through its CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development and the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS network, which has expanded beyond the CARICOM region to include the Dominican Republic and Cuba as well as the Dutch, English and French-speaking areas of the Caribbean, our region has recognized the broader development agenda and accountability framework for AIDS within the post-2015 development agenda. To that end, we have highlighted the interconnections and potential synergies that break down silos across various sectors, placing the emphasis on rights-based movements that aim to achieve social justice and equity, leaving none behind.

In addition, the region's ministers of health have urged their Heads of Government to urgently consider strategies for joint action to ensure that the region continues to maximize the use of flexibilities related to trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, including the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, which provides opportunities for Caribbean countries to expand access to low-cost, quality-assured pharmaceutical products and pass laws to prevent patent evergreening practices.

Changing the way we do business requires that our leaders demonstrate political will. It requires that civil society maintain its activism, that development partners provide adequate and sustained financing for efforts to end AIDS and that national health systems be strengthened. Among other indicators, those requirements force us to recognize that the 2011 Political Declaration, though still relevant, must enable the creation of a framework that embraces the good practices in the AIDS response in order to advance global health, social justice and development. The key elements include collective leadership and engagement on the part of the affected communities in decision-making, investment in innovation and implementation research, the pursuance of operational convergence, the building of multi-stakeholder collaboration and sustainable financing for the convergence of AIDS and global health.

CARICOM is of the view that linkages with the AIDS response should be promoted across the post-2015 development agenda, particularly in the areas of poverty eradication, employment creation and the empowerment of women and girls. CARICOM member States will continue to take the necessary steps to create synergies at the country and regional level to achieve our targets on HIV and AIDS. In addition to working to advance South-South cooperation, we look forward to continued collaboration with our development partners to that end.

Mr. Sana (Rwanda): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Group of African States. The African Group thanks the Secretary-General for his report (A/69/856) and takes note of its recommendations.

We are gathered here today to shape the ways by which we can ensure realization of the global goal of ending AIDS as a public-health threat by 2030. It is therefore important to assess the actions and investments that the international community will have to implement in the next five years in order to achieve that objective.

The Secretary-General's report shows that the global HIV response has reached an important stage, in which rates of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths in sub-Saharan Africa continue to decline. It is important to point out that the member States of the African Union (AU) have taken significant steps in the area at various levels, including the adoption in 2012 by the AU's Heads of State and Government of a road map on shared responsibility and global solidarity for AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. They have strengthened ownership, accountability and partnerships aimed at accelerating progress in achieving clear deliverables under three pillars — financing, access to medicines and improved governance — in order to help countries build long-term and sustainable solutions.

In line with those policies and actions, a special summit of the AU held in Abuja in July 2013 issued a declaration on "Abuja Actions toward the Elimination of HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Africa by 2030", calling for accelerating antiretroviral treatment, eliminating mother-to-child HIV transmission and strengthening preventive measures for reducing new HIV infections. Its commitment to allocating 15 per

cent of AU member States' individual national budgets to the health sector was another clear demonstration of the strong political will behind this cause in Africa.

In fact, Africa, in collaboration with its partners, has made considerable progress in creating awareness and mitigating the effects of the pandemic among its population. We have also made significant progress towards achieving universal access to health-care services in general and those directed at HIV and AIDS in particular.

Despite that progress, the African Group is concerned that North Africa is experiencing a rise in HIV infections. We are of the view that a critical analysis should be undertaken of the reasons for that rise so that the subregion can receive assistance and undertake the necessary precautions.

The African Group takes note of the UNAIDS initiative to launch new HIV treatment targets for the post-2015 era at the twentieth International Conference on AIDS in 2014. The fast track 90-90-90 targets provide that, by 2020, 90 per cent of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, 90 per cent of all people diagnosed with HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy, and 90 per cent of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will achieve viral suppression. The Group also notes that meeting those targets will require significant strengthening of health systems; smart, focused investment in the interventions that have the highest impact; and increased access to tailored services for all those left behind.

The Group therefore calls for increased resources to be devoted to HIV/AIDS responses. It also stresses the importance of complementarity in innovative sources of financing in addition to traditional funding, including official development assistance (ODA), to support national strategies, financing plans and multilateral efforts aimed at combating HIV/AIDS.

The African Group further reaffirms the importance of guaranteeing access to affordable treatments, vaccines, medicines, traditional medicine and indigenous knowledge. It also reaffirms the importance of prioritizing the finding of solutions that would make possible pharmaceutical industry licenses for the production of generic HIV medicines for companies in the developing world. This should be done by intensifying coordination efforts with the World Health Organization, the World Trade Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization to support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for AIDS and to provide affordable access to those vaccines and medicines, pursuant to the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health. That Agreement affirms developing countries' right to use to the fullest the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding the flexibility to protect public health and, in particular, to provide access to medicines for all and technologies for the treatment, care and prevention of HIV/AIDS, including vaccines, medicines and antiretroviral therapy.

The Group also calls for a substantial increase in ODA allocations for health, financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries; and strengthening the capacity of all countries, particularly developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of HIV.

However, the African Group is alarmed that, until now, the AIDS response has been failing young people. In some instances, not all pregnant women are accessing antiretroviral therapy, and not all pregnant women are being offered HIV testing. Moreover, UNAIDS estimates that in 2013 more than half of HIV transmissions to infants occurred during breastfeeding, which today leads to more mother-to-child transmissions than those related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Health services have left behind children exposed to or living with HIV. In 2013, only 42 per cent of HIV-exposed children received early infant diagnostics within two months of birth, and nearly half of those who received diagnostic services received their test results. Furthermore, children living with HIV are often not accessing treatment, and pediatric antiretroviral therapy regimens are far less available to them than that for adults. Globally, only 24 per cent of children living with HIV have access to treatment, as compared to 38 per cent of adults. Issues related to the formulation of pediatric antiretroviral therapy regimens, such as finding the right dose and palatable taste, still remain a challenge. The African Group therefore reaffirms and reiterates that prevention, diagnosis, treatment, strong surveillance systems and universal access to services must be at the core of our efforts. In that regard, increased access to early infant and paediatric diagnosis and treatment, which will require strengthened health systems and mechanisms, should be given the critical attention they deserve.

The Group underscores that universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment remains paramount in global response strategies and constitutes a fundamental human right. The Group reiterates the importance of regional, cultural and religious value systems as well as peculiarities in considering human rights issues. The Group is disturbed by the continuous use of certain terms in the Secretary-General's report and stresses the need to maintain joint ownership of the international human rights agenda and to consider human rights issues in an objective and non-confrontational manner. It is the African Group's view that we should refrain from using notions that fall outside the internationally agreed human rights framework, taking into account that such attempts constitute an expression of disregard for universal human rights.

According to the Secretary-General's report, stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS continue to prevail. The Group is concerned that such attitudes undermine an effective AIDS response, and people living with HIV continue to face challenges. In some countries, they are criminalized and denied health-care services and family-planning measures. In some cases, they are forced or coerced into sterilization or abortion or face gender-based violence from their partners. Others are refused employment. Punitive laws and practices undermine the efforts to bring HIV treatment to all who need it. The Group strongly urges that people with HIV/AIDS should be treated fairly and equally and be protected from stigma, discriminatory practices and related intolerance.

The Group believes that prevention should remain among the key elements in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Priority should continue to be given to the development of prevention programming, including through sensitization and campaigns against risky activities and risky sexual behaviours. In that context, although there has been progress in reducing new HIV infections in people who inject drugs, the Group believes that, while scaling up HIV treatment for people who inject drugs, more emphasis should be placed on efforts such as counselling and other means to encourage people to refrain from using drugs. In Africa, drug use and abuse remain a critical legal matter.

In conclusion, the African Group reaffirms its commitment to fight the HIV/AIDS scourge. The Group welcomes medical research and development and technological initiatives on the treatment and cure of HIV/AIDS that are accessible, affordable to all and of good quality. We believe that HIV treatment for 15 million people, a target set by the Secretary-General, is achievable only if the significant current gains in HIV prevention and antiretroviral treatment are sustained, including strengthening the treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission. The Group therefore calls upon its partners to support the business plan for the implementation of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa, which has been developed in collaboration with partners and which was subsequently adopted at the special session of the fifth conference of the African Union Ministers of Health, held in May 2012.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): We thank the Secretary-General for his report entitled "Future of the AIDS response: building on past achievements and accelerating progress to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030" (A/69/856).

We have set ourselves an ambitious goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. To achieve this, international commitment must be renewed and strengthened with regard to the 10 priority areas set out in the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS.

As far as India is concerned, the Government has undertaken targeted interventions for people living with HIV, high-risk groups and bridge populations. A strategy for the period 2012-2017 is in place that is based on lessons learned from the previous phases of the programme. This aims to accelerate the process of reversal by further strengthening the response to the epidemic. We have also involved the corporate sector, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders towards this end.

Notwithstanding significant global progress in overall terms, there is concern that it has been uneven in the priority areas of the Political Declaration. At the same time, the HIV epidemic has been on the rise in new regions.

The Secretary-General's report points out the need for accelerated efforts to ensure that the required levels of international and domestic funding are available to stabilize progress and maintain HIV-related services. Of particular importance is scaled-up antiretroviral therapy to extend lives and improve the quality of life. Global efforts have ensured that the target of 15 million people receiving antiretroviral therapy by 2015 has nearly been met. While this is a matter of

some satisfaction, we also need to reach the remaining 22 million people infected with HIV.

The challenge before us is not of unavailability of medical treatment, but of accessibility arising from its high cost in many developing countries. We need to bridge this North-South divide if we are to achieve the 2030 target.

The Indian pharmaceutical industry has been plugging this critical gap by producing high-quality affordable drugs for use in India and other developing countries. India is committed to using all flexibilities allowed under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) of the World Trade Organization to ensure the availability of affordable and quality medicine to all people living with HIV.

It is, however, regrettable that these TRIPS flexibilities, which are critical for the provision of public health care to millions across the developing world, are being questioned in some quarters. It would be most callous if we were to allow narrow considerations of commerce to deny people the most basic and the most fundamental human right: the right to life. We would like to take the opportunity of this debate to draw attention to this matter.

While Governments no doubt need to augment their national efforts, it is equally evident that many developing countries will not be able to meet these challenges themselves. The need for international solidarity to ensure an integrated and holistic approach that includes effective prevention strategies, access to low-cost affordable treatment for all and scaled-up treatment and sound health systems cannot be overemphasized if we are to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Ms. Grignon (Kenya): I thank you, Madam Acting President, for giving me the floor to address the Assembly at this meeting to consider the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (A/69/856) highlighting the progress made on the status of the epidemic and the tasks ahead in terms of achieving the end of the public health threat posed by the AIDS epidemic.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Rwanda on behalf of the African Group.

Our consideration of this highly important issue comes at a watershed moment in the evolution of the international development agenda. Key milestones have already been achieved in the process of elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda — notably, the sustainable development goals, goal 3 of which recognizes the importance of ensuring healthy lives and the promotion of well-being and includes the critical target to end epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis by 2030, which is indeed instructive for our deliberations today.

Almost 15 years ago, at the turn of the millennium, the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment (resolution S-26/2, annex) represented a recognition that the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, through its devastating scale and impact, constituted a global emergency. Further, it recognized HIV/AIDS as a most formidable challenge to human life and dignity that undermines social and economic development throughout the world and affects all levels of society at the national, community, family and individual levels. Subsequent declarations and resolutions of the Assembly have outlined this fact, and there have been a raft of decisions and recommendations adopted to address this epidemic.

The continuing ravages of the AIDS epidemic are a poignant reminder of the much-touted unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We welcome the report of the Secretary-General and note that, while highlighting the extraordinary gains made towards halting and reversing the course of the epidemic, it reminds us that the task is far from over. Of great concern is the slow progress and sliding backwards in some countries and regions, even as a majority of countries report good progress towards the targets of the Declaration and MDGs. This was also mentioned by the representative of Rwanda while reading the statement of the African Group.

In the process of elaborating the post-2015 development agenda, we all recognize that there is unfinished business in achieving the MDGs and that it behoves us to craft a new development agenda that takes care of this and that goes beyond, to secure our collective and ambitious aspirations for our common future, development and well-being. This is why we greatly appreciate the reflection of the unfinished agenda of the MDGs in the sustainable development goals. The onus is upon us, the international community, with the impending dawn of a new development

paradigm, to make the achievement of the end of HIV/AIDS a reality. This will call for intensifying efforts, increasing our investment and emphasizing accelerated action. In this regard, we welcome the development and implementation by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS of the ambitious fast-track targets for 2020.

Kenya is committed, and remains steadfast, in its efforts to stem the tide of this deadly scourge, both nationally and as part of a dynamic African region experiencing economic growth, having been re-categorized as a middle-income country. The Constitution of Kenya reflects this changing context and places health as a priority, in view of the fact that development is critical in building a skilled and competitive workforce and lifting people's living standards.

Progress has been made with regard to HIV prevalence, which has dropped from a high of some 14 per cent in the 1990s to stabilize at the current rate of 6 per cent among adults. In the last five years, there has been a decline of two percentage points, and new infections among children have almost been halved. HIV nonetheless continues to contribute to high mortality rates, burden households and strain national health systems and budgets. The number of new HIV infections among adults still remains unacceptably high. There are marked gender, age and geographical disparities in HIV prevalence, which remains highest among women, at 6.9 per cent, when compared with that of men, which stands at 4.3 per cent.

Sexual transmission remains the most common mode of HIV transmission — accounting for 85 per cent of all new infections. It is regrettable that, every day, 15 mothers and over 290 children under the age of 5 die from preventable diseases, pregnancy and birth complications, HIV and AIDS. Those numbers are still too high, and countries will continue to need international cooperation and support to fund their AIDS responses.

Kenya's AIDS strategic framework for the period 2014-2015 to 2018-2019 exemplifies the firm commitment made by key stakeholders to help the national Government as well as county governments in their efforts to deliver better health for all, with a focus on cost-effective and socially inclusive interventions to prevent and manage HIV/AIDS. Kenya's new and progressive Constitution asserts that the Government has a duty to address the needs of vulnerable groups within society through the provision of safety net programmes, such as nutrition feeding programmes.

Kenya has also enacted the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act, which seeks to promote supportive care and protective and preventive measures against HIV/AIDS. The Government's strategy emphasizes an equitable HIV response that ensures that no one is left behind. That response is a priority for Kenya in its efforts to achieve its goals, and focuses on effective evidence-based investments that target priority populations so that all Kenyans are reached, stigma and discrimination are reduced and improved health outcomes are achieved.

In line with the call for increased investment and leadership set forth in the Secretary-General's report, Kenya's AIDS strategic framework underscores the need to increase domestic and sustainable financing for HIV as a matter of priority. It outlines an innovative leveraged funding approach based on the implementation of an HIV fund that will increase resources, increase access to universal health care for those living with HIV, and, ultimately, subsidize Kenya's future liability for HIV prevention and treatment.

In Nairobi, at the launch of All In — a new global initiative to end the AIDS epidemic among adolescents — President Uhuru Kenyatta announced Kenya's commitment to lead by example by increasing domestic resources for its AIDS response, which includes improving HIV prevention and treatment and providing essential health care and counselling services for adolescents. The Ministry of Education has been mandated with the duty to re-examine the national curriculum to better engage with young people living with HIV and to eliminate stigma and discrimination in schools. The Government has launched its first national gender plan of action to facilitate the mobilization of stakeholders in the design and the implementation of actions and targets. That plan of action, which has been disseminated in all of Kenya's 47 counties, will guide stakeholders on how to mainstream gender in the national response to HIV/AIDS.

In 2011, Kenya was among countries that endorsed the global plan that aims to eliminate new HIV infections among children by 2015 and keep their mothers alive. The recent global focus on evidence-informed HIV prevention programming has introduced a paradigm shift, allowing Kenya to examine innovative ways to improve our investments in preventing new HIV infections. In that regard, the Government's strategic

plan has reduced the number of new infections by at least 50 per cent, reduced AIDS-related mortality by 25 per cent, led to a marked decrease in HIV-related morbidity due to the availability of antiretroviral treatment, and reduced the socioeconomic impact of HIV/AIDS at household and community levels. The Government's collaborative efforts with national and external partners have also led to the formulation of a comprehensive prevention of mother-to-child transmission strategy. This targets expectant mothers and their spouses and provides voluntary counselling and testing as well as antiretroviral treatment for the mother and child. As a consequence of that campaign, new infections among children have been brought down from an estimated 100 HIV infections per day to only 36.

Primary prevention among women of reproductive age, family planning for all HIV-positive women and those who want to delay their next birth, antiretroviral prophylaxis during pregnancy, delivery and breastfeeding and care and treatment are all services that the Government continues to provide.

Our first lady, Margaret Kenyatta, launched the Beyond Zero campaign, which aims to promote HIV control and strengthen maternal and neonatal health services to prepare for the birth of a future HIV-free generation in Kenya. She has spearheaded that effort by running marathons to raise awareness and mobilize funds for the purchase of mobile clinics to deliver health-care services all over the country. She has delivered more than half those mobile clinics to half the counties in Kenya. The campaign is guided by Kenya's development priorities, as outlined in Kenya Vision 2030, Kenya's AIDS strategic framework and the Kenyan health sector strategic and investment plan 2012-2017. The campaign is organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other key stakeholder.s

In conclusion, in line with Kenya's priorities, I would like to reiterate our call to the international community to scale up resource mobilization, ensure adequate resource allocation and secure political commitment and leadership in the fight against HIV and AIDS, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and other less privileged regions of the world. The end of the devastating AIDS epidemic, which is set to be a truly historic global achievement for humankind, is within reach during our generation.

Mr. Bosah (Nigeria): Nigeria associates itself with the statement just delivered on behalf of the African Group by the representative of Rwanda.

We join other delegations in congratulating the President for convening this important meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/69/856), and the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Mr. Michel Sidibé, for his statement. We welcome other stakeholders, such as youth, women, the private sector and people living with HIV/AIDS, and thank them for their collective endeavours.

The adoption of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (resolution S-26/2, annex) and of the follow-up Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS of 2006 (resolution 60/262, annex) and 2011 (resolution 65/277, annex), respectively, marks the determination of the international community never seen before on any single disease condition to wage a global and sustained war on HIV/AIDS. Much progress has been made since then, thanks to our collective determination, to the extent that HIV is now better understood, and AIDS is no longer an automatic death sentence. Yet a lot remains to be done.

HIV remains a great global concern, particularly in Africa, where HIV/AIDS poses a heavy financial burden, a social nightmare and a development disaster. The disease knows no race, age or gender. In addition, women are at much higher risk of contracting HIV owing to their biological make-up and how vulnerable they are seen to be within their communities. In sub-Saharan Africa, three young women are infected for every man, while girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are six times more likely to be HIV-positive as compared to boys the same age. The disease is also a leading cause of maternal and child mortality in the African region. As a result, greater attention must be given to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

We therefore agree with the Secretary-General that promoting gender-sensitive policies and empowering women constitute an integral part of the global AIDS response. We acknowledge the need to address the structural gender barriers and negative power relationships that affect the ability of women and girls to confront the challenge of HIV. We share the view that critical action is needed to ensure that young women and girls can access and remain in education; women feel safe and have control over their own sexual health; women are engaged to a greater extent in leadership, decision-making and service provision; and there is a greater promotion of women's legal rights and access to justice.

As a demonstration of our determination to strengthen regional cooperation, Nigeria hosted the Abuja+12 Special Summit of the African Union on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in July 2013. We will continue to play an active role in vigorously supporting and beneficially advancing those objectives.

In spite of the commitment to fight HIV/AIDS, a large population and limited financial and technological resources have made the fight against the pandemic a major challenge for Nigeria, particularly placing a heavy burden on the health-care delivery system. However, we continue to rise to the challenge, making considerable progress in the process. Some of the initiatives that we have put in place include adopting a national health bill on 19 February 2014. The new law provides a framework for the regulation, development and management of a national health system, which is aimed at setting standards for rendering health-care services.

In addition, on 10 April 2014, Nigeria's National Assembly adopted the HIV/AIDS anti-stigma and discrimination bill. The new law seeks to prevent the stigmatization of, and discrimination against, those living with or infected with HIV/AIDS. On 25 March, the Nigerian Government also adopted a bill called the Violence Against Persons Prohibition, which provides a legislative and legal framework for the prevention of all forms of violence against vulnerable persons, especially women and girls. It seeks to provide maximum protection and remedies for victims of violence and punishment for offenders.

Prevention also remains a major concern, as there is still relatively low access to the prevention of mother-to-child transmission services in rural areas, even as stigmatization and discrimination pose barriers to universal access to services. Furthermore, national ownership and the sustainability of responses continue to be undermined by limited and unpredictable funding. We remain committed nonetheless. Our new Administration, while building on the success of previous Governments, is determined to provide renewed impetus for advancement and development and to consider the health sector as a key component and target of our human development agenda.

We expect that those national efforts will be complemented, not replaced, by support from development partners, the United Nations system and donors. Our international cooperation strategy will not be restricted to the usual major donors; rather, we seek to expand it to include greater collaboration at the regional, continental and South-South levels.

To say that adequate funding is critical to the success of our HIV/AIDS strategy is an understatement. Many countries, including mine, cannot not achieve the noble goals of our declarations, nor the Millennium Development Goals, without the support of our development partners. While appreciating their cooperation and assistance, we call on them to make every effort to fulfil their obligations early in view of the need to create a formidable post-2015 development agenda. We also call for flexibility and understanding on the issue of the transfer of technology and training in the production and distribution of HIV/AIDS-related drugs and devices.

Mr. Maksimychev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is firmly committed to the goals and principles of the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS (resolution 65/277, annex), which we regard as the key framework and basis for increasing international cooperation in the fight against the human immunodeficiency virus. In the past two decades, Russia has undertaken significant efforts to prevent HIV infection. Russian national legislation guarantees that all citizens, including those from high-risk groups, have access to a wide range of prevention programmes and free voluntary testing for HIV and that those who are HIV-positive have access to free, high-quality medical assistance and social protection.

An important role in achieving encouraging results in reducing HIV infection in our country can also be ascribed to the strategy we have chosen, which is based not on the principle of harm reduction, but on risk-exclusion programmes. Such policies have kept the disease under control. We are convinced that a genuinely scientific approach to drug addiction, prevention and treatment is incompatible with any form of drug legalization.

The vertical transmission of HIV infections in Russia has virtually disappeared, and we are prepared to offer our successful experience of that work to any interested partner. Our country has continued to contribute actively to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases around the world. Through that work we aim to to combine participation in international mechanisms with the provision of assistance on a bilateral basis. In 2013, in cooperation with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and with the participation of Russian

donors, we began the successful roll-out of a project to help strengthen national systems for controlling infections in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, including by modernizing material and technical resources for diagnostic laboratories and improving the training of relevant specialists. Last year, together with UNAIDS, we organized the fourth Conference on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, held in Moscow. The result was a plan of action that defined the obligations of partner countries, donor countries, international organizations and civil society in achieving the chief goal of the United Nations strategy on HIV/AIDS — zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero deaths from AIDS.

Our experience of cooperation within the Commonwealth of Independent States has shown that it is collaboration at the regional and subregional levels, where the spread of infectious diseases has similar characteristics, that plays an important role in combating the epidemic. We intend to continue to expand our technical, financial and organizational assistance to countries in the region for their efforts in that direction.

We are also giving very serious attention to the issue of infection within the framework of Russia's chairship this year of the countries of the BRICS group — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. One upcoming event on the subject will be held this month in St. Petersburg, bringing together experts on preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission. At the same time an international conference will be held in Moscow on the issue of ensuring a joint response to the challenges of dangerous infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

Combating the spread of infectious diseases will continue to be a focus Russian international development assistance, which was strengthened in the State policy concept in this sphere approved by RussianPresident Putin in 2014.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

United Nations A/69/PV.94

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

94th plenary meeting
Monday, 15 June 2015, 4 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 4.10 p.m.

Agenda item 4

Election of the President of the General Assembly

Election of the President of the General Assembly for the seventieth session

The President: In accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I now invite members to proceed to the election of the President of the General Assembly for the seventieth session.

May I recall that, in accordance with paragraph 1 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 33/138, of 19 December 1978, the President of the General Assembly for the seventieth session should be elected from among the Western European and Other States. In that connection, the Chair of the Group of the Western European and Other States for the month of May 2015 informed the Secretariat that the group has endorsed His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, Speaker of the Parliament of Denmark, for the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

Taking into account the provisions of paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, I therefore declare His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft of the Denmark elected by acclamation President of the General Assembly for the seventieth session. On behalf of the Assembly, I wholeheartedly congratulate Mr. Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly for the seventieth session.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, who has just been elected President of the General Assembly for the seventieth session, to take the floor.

Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark): Since Denmark signed the Charter of the United Nations 70 years ago in San Francisco, we, the people of Denmark, have done our utmost to achieve the goals laid down in the Charter. We have had peacekeepers on active duty since the first United Nations mission in 1956, and we have for almost four decades delivered on the 0.7 commitment of official development assistance.

Allow me to thank the Assembly for having entrusted me and — for the first time — my country with presiding over its seventieth session. I will turn 70 myself during the seventieth session.

As a teenager 55 years ago, I walked into the offices of the United Nations Association in Copenhagen to collect information about the workings of the United Nations. Back then, I sincerely hoped that therein lay the framework in which rationality and humanity would prevail; that would make disarmament agreements possible; that could finally bring the major Powers to cooperate for a better future for the whole human race; that could assist peoples in attaining self-government and independence and, without racial prejudice, could protect the rights of minorities, vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women, children, the displaced, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples.

Today, that hope and those objectives remain as relevant as ever. We will celebrate the seventieth

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anniversary of the United Nations throughout the session. I aim to organize our work in a way that allows us to reflect on the successes, as well as the shortcomings, in these first 70 years, while also looking to the future. The theme of my term as President will therefore be "The United Nations at 70 — a new commitment to action".

Since San Francisco, the Organization has gained in universal membership. In that timespan, the world's population has almost tripled to more than 7 billion people. The struggle to catalyse peaceful, sustainable development and combat climate change for all 7 billion is both the challenge and the opportunity of our lifetime. Fundamentally, a girl or a boy born today has the same right as 70 years ago to aspire to — in the words of the Charter — "social progress and a better standard of life in larger freedom" and to enjoy the equal rights of women and men in dignity. The key to success lies in identifying pathways for all countries to develop new ways and means to deliver on this aspiration, to produce and consume without undermining our common future for generations to come.

In order to succeed, we have to strive to build a more fair and stable world and we all have to play our part. The donor countries must deliver on their commitments to official development assistance. In a world where the 92 wealthiest dollar billionaires own more than the poorest half of humankind, all nations must strengthen resource mobilization efforts to meet development needs.

Allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for your guidance and vision and for focusing the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly on delivering a transformative post-2015 development agenda. Over the past 15 years, the Millennium Development Goals have been a successful guide and framework for our joint efforts to reduce poverty, end hunger, bring children to school, combat diseases and maternal mortality to mention but a few achievements. What is now facing Member States is the final stretch towards adopting a universal, people-centred, transformative development agenda that addresses the struggle of our lifetime. When implemented, it will enable us to eradicate extreme poverty while keeping climate change at bay, building resilience and creating inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Personally, I look forward to collaborating closely with you, Mr President, as our two countries will jointly and symbolically co-chair the summit in September for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. A successful outcome will stand out as a historic achievement for the global sustainable development agenda and indeed beyond. I would also like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his dedication to the United Nations and for his relentless focus on advancing the greater good of humankind.

My first priority will be to ensure that the summit is an occasion for world leaders to join hands to achieve the new goals in a new commitment to action, which is the theme that I have chosen for the seventieth session. That commitment — and the new global partnership that goes with it — will be at the core of driving the work of the United Nations until 2030. We will operationalize that theme by taking stock of the three pillars of the United Nations. Since the summit will focus on sustainable development, it would only be natural to dedicate this year's general debate to commemorating the United Nations at 70 and focus on the road ahead for peace, security and human rights.

The financing for development conference in Addis Ababa should provide the necessary boost and trust to mobilize substantial commitments and resources needed for years to come. Decision-makers at all levels should feel obliged to meet their commitments and feel accountable for doing so. The global public, civil society and business should also continue to engage and contribute beyond this conference. A successful and ambitious outcome from the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris will be the first real test of these commitments to development in an environmentally sustainable manner, the first transformation of the new goals into action on a wider scale. We must not fail this test. The youth of today would suffer the consequences of our generation's inability to find common ground. I therefore firmly support your focus on climate change, Mr. President, and, if needed, I am ready to build on your efforts to promote its success in Paris.

It is a sad but ineluctable assessment that the world today suffers from armed conflict, terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization, nuclear proliferation, as well as increasing risks of further tensions among major powers. In that context, the United Nations' effective and efficient contribution to international peace and security, which is the second of my overall priorities, of course, is more important than ever. It seems all too

apparent that only a world that demonstrates respect for the most fundamental human rights will be sufficiently harmonious, as well as socially and economically sustainable. Therefore my third priority is to support further progress in the field of human rights. Issues such as governance, rule of law, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women should all be considered as integral parts of obtaining and safekeeping progress in other fields of intervention, either peace- and security-related or developmental in nature.

With an overall focus on the United Nations at 70 and the implementation of the new universal agenda and the new commitment, I will convene a limited number of high-level events in 2016. In addition, it is my intention to organize a commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations on Friday, 23 October. Cutting across the three priorities will be a firm emphasis on gender equality and youth, as well as creating and nurturing partnerships with civil society, the private sector and with other relevant stakeholders.

I also intend to organize high-level events in April, May and July respectively on the following themes: first, how to achieve the new sustainable development goals, targets and commitments; secondly, strengthening the role and coherence of the United Nations in peace and security, including creating synergies between the follow-up to the reviews on peace operations, peacebuilding and on women and peace and security; and thirdly, the implementation of human rights, governance, rule of law and gender aspects of the work of the United Nations. My goal is to seek pragmatic, action-oriented outcomes that provide guidance for all actors — the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and the private sector — on how to proceed with timely and effective implementation. Within this overall framework, and in support of these events, I will also convene a limited number of briefings, thematic debates and consultations with non-State actors.

In preparing for my election, my goal was to consult broadly with Member States. I have personally been enriched and moved by the discussions and the excellent advice I obtained there. I look forward to continuing our close cooperation during my tenure. Many have underscored their interests in seeing progress in the United Nations reform agenda and the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. Most interest seems to be centred on the reform of the Security Council and creating more transparency and openness when selecting the next Secretary-General. I will aim to continue this work based on the status in both tracks when the seventieth session begins. My intention is to conduct the presidency as transparently, inclusively and openly as possible.

At the same time, I will also aim to take a hands-on approach and be involved in coordinating the work of the General Assembly as it unfolds over the course of the seventieth session. This includes a 10-year review of progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in December, the United Nations budget and the two special sessions on world drug problems and HIV/AIDS in June next year. I intend to continue the tradition of coordinating closely with the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council to ensure a seamless flow of information between the main bodies. In my engagement with the United Nations system, I will seek to ensure that the General Assembly is regularly briefed on how subsidiary bodies, as well as funds, agencies and programmes, are moving forward in implementing the outcomes of the major conferences held in 2015 in their work.

Today's decision-makers must acknowledge that 2015 is a time to make a new commitment to action for the sake of generations to come. That is the signal we should communicate from the seventieth session of the world's most representative, deliberative multilateral body. The interconnectedness and universality of the new sustainable development goals and the global complexities they reflect create unprecedented challenges and opportunities. We will have to find ways to achieve sustainable growth in which the distance between rich and poor nations and peoples does not become larger but smaller; in which we not only create development and eradicate extreme poverty, but also deliver a more equitable access to, and distribution of, global goods; and in which global cooperation creates a more fair, sustainable and stable world, as envisaged by the Charter of the United Nations. Multilateralism and the work of the United Nations, the trust and hope in global solutions it inspires, is as needed today as it was when the United Nations was established, as it also was 55 years ago when, for the first time, I actually embraced the hopes and ideas of a stronger, more committed, more cooperative international community.

The President: I thank His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President-elect of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

I would like to extend my congratulations to Speaker Lykketoft on his election by acclamation as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

Mr. Lykketoft brings a wealth of experience to this position. He is the current Speaker of the Parliament of Denmark and previously served as his country's Minister for Foreign Affairs from 2000 to 2001 and as Minister of Finance from 1993 to 2001. I am confident that these important leadership positions have equipped him well to lead this august body at its seventieth session.

The seventieth session will be historic. We will commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, adopt an ambitious and transformative post-2015 development agenda, and work towards a universal climate change agreement in December at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

With these important milestones approaching, we still have important preparatory work to do at the current session, in particular the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held next month in Addis Ababa. These negotiations have now reached a critical stage, and we must redouble our efforts to ensure successful outcomes.

I would like to congratulate Speaker Lykketoft on his choice of theme for the seventieth session, "The United Nations at 70 — a new commitment to action". Once again, I congratulate him on his election and have confidence that he will be an able steward of the work of this body. I look forward to supporting him over the coming months as he prepares to assume his responsibilities as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I am pleased to offer my warmest congratulations to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President-elect of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. This is well-deserved recognition of Denmark's important role on the international stage, and it is a testimony to Mr. Lykketoft's personal strength.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the current President, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa. I am most grateful for our fruitful collaboration in relation to a number of historic events. We gathered religious leaders from around the world in April for our high-level thematic debate on promoting tolerance and reconciliation, and we shared the meaningful chance to unveil the historic permanent memorial in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. I thank him for his leadership and commitment.

This election is an annual event on the United Nations calendar, but this year offers an extraordinary opportunity to shape history. In 2015, we will reach our target date for the Millennium Development Goals, the largest campaign against poverty in history, and will hold the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, our new vision for sustainable development, which will guide the world for the next 15 years.

We could not have a better leader than Mr. Lykketoft. He is an accomplished economist with decades of experience in his country's Parliament. As a former Minister of Finance and Minister for Foreign Affairs, he brings great understanding of the major challenges of our times. He has a background of outstanding commitment to development. I commend Denmark for its long record of meeting and surpassing the United Nations development assistance target, and I applaud Mr. Lykketoft for the fact that when he was Minister of Finance, Denmark dramatically exceeded that target to help even more people struggling against poverty. I have had many in-depth discussions with him, and I especially appreciated meeting him almost two years ago in his office in Copenhagen. At that time, he took me on a tour of the Danish Parliament; now, he will preside over the General Assembly, our parliament of humanity.

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. At this session, our new President will turn 70. I count on him to celebrate these milestones with an even stronger commitment to multilateralism, international cooperation and global solidarity. He has chosen an inspiring theme: "The United Nations at 70 — a new commitment to action". Together, we can ensure that the United Nations achieves its historic ambitions for this year and helps secure the long-term future of our world.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now give the floor to the representative of Rwanda, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): Allow me, Mr. President, to thank you on behalf of the Group of African States for your exceptional leadership and achievements at the current session of the General Assembly, while at the same time congratulating His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the Assembly at its seventieth session. It is our hope that the progress being made at the current session under your exceptional leadership will help Mr. Lykketoft's tenure to be dynamic and its effects far-reaching, given the pressing issues ahead.

The current session has been a demanding one, in which the General Assembly has sought to transition from the Millennium Development Goals to sustainable development goals while advancing the work of the United Nations in critical areas, including environmental and social development and security. The African Group is also grateful that under your leadership, Sir, many efforts have also been dedicated to revitalizing the work of the Assembly. Those efforts include forging a closer working relationship with the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, while at the same time promoting greater synergies and cooperation between regional and subregional organizations, including the African Union. Indeed, the African continent is very proud of you, Sir, as one of its greatest sons, for serving with distinction amid those pressing issues of international concern.

As we move towards the seventieth session, the Organization is celebrating the seventieth anniversary of its efforts to build a more caring world — one in which future generations will be free from the ravages of war and underdevelopment. While under your leadership, Sir the Organization has done a lot, today the promises of 70 years ago do not appear to have substantially materialized.

The African Group believes that it is also high time for the Organization, through self-reflection, to build on the momentum and energy you have created and to move beyond business as usual in order to make its work more relevant, effective and better suited to its purpose. Achieving that, however, depends on the participation and cooperation of all Members, big or small, developed and developing, in a spirit of mutual understanding, dialogue and tolerance. As we move towards the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, the African Group will pursue broadened consultations with the office of the President-elect to continue the work that is underway to make that agenda truly universal and sustainable.

We will also continue to deploy efforts to revitalize the Organization and work with other regional groupings to advocate for Security Council reform, in order for the Organization to live up to its expectations, including openness, fairness, accountability and representation. As we move ahead, pressing priorities include the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, taking into account the recommendations of the ongoing review of peace operations and the peacebuilding architecture, as well as the follow-up and implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

To conclude, we are confident that the President-elect, with his high-level expertise and experience, which ranges from his role as a parliamentarian to his work as minister of finance and foreign affairs, will facilitate the way forward.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Bahrain, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain): I have the honour and privilege to address the Assembly on behalf of the States members of the Group of Asia-Pacific States to extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft of Denmark on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. Mr. Lykketoft is poised to take over the helm of the Assembly at the momentous time when we celebrate 70 years in the life of this important governing body and when we have pledged in common to adopt a sustainable and enhanced post-2015 development agenda. We shall fully support Mr. Lykketoft in his resolve to address the main challenges facing humanity today, notably climate change, global poverty and gender disparity, among others.

While we push forward in implementing that ambitious development agenda, we are confident that Mr. Lykketoft's experience and leadership represent a major asset for the work of this body as he takes over from Mr. Sam Kutesa, who has very ably led the General

Assembly during its sixty-ninth session, On behalf of the Asia and Pacific Group, I would like to thank Mr. Kutesa for undertaking a very ambitious workload during his presidency. The Asia-Pacific group extends its since wishes to Mr. Kutesa for continued success in his future endeavours.

We have a complex yet optimistic agenda as the United Nations leads the global initiative aimed at making our world a better place. We hope that Mr. Lykketoft and his office will be provided with all the resources necessary to successfully cope with the responsibilities of the General Assembly/ For its part, the Asia and Pacific Group reiterates its commitment to continue its cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and we wish him the best of luck.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Poland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Winid (Poland): I have the honour and pleasure, on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, to extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. Mr. Lykketoft brings to this important position very rich experience gained during his distinguished career in the Danish Government and, in recent years, as Speaker of the Danish Parliament. We strongly believe that he will make a significant contribution to the success of the upcoming session of the General Assembly, which will be of particular importance.

On behalf of the Eastern European Group, I would like to express our gratitude to President Sam Kutesa for his remarkable efforts during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Over the past months, Mr. Kutesa has led the complex work of this body in an excellent manner, focusing first of all on the post-2015 development agenda. As we enter the final stage of preparations for the September summit on the new development agenda and the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, the leadership of the President of the General Assembly will remain of crucial importance. We hope that his highly beneficial engagement with the United Nations will continue in the future, and we wish him all the best in all his future endeavours.

Let me conclude by confirming the full support of the States members of the Group of Eastern European States for the newly elected President of the General Assembly, Mr. Lykketoft, during his upcoming tenure. We wish him success in fulfilling this demanding mandate.

The President: I now the give the floor to the representative of Panama, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama): On behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), I have the honour to extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft of Denmark on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. Mr. Lykketoft represents a country, Denmark, with a number of values in common with GRULAC member States, including multilateralism, dialogue among nations, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and full respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, to name but a few.

Mr. Lykketoft enters the presidency during a critical transitional period, as well as a historic year. The implementation of the post-2015 development agenda will make the seventieth session of the General Assembly of exceptional importance for the United Nations and the global community that we represent. Under Mr. Lykketoft's lead, the General Assembly will make decisions concerning the new global development framework, replacing the current goals and focusing on poverty eradication, social and economic development, women's empowerment and environmental protection. Another pivotal undertaking for the General Assembly under Mr. Lykketoft's guidance will be continuing the revitalization process in order to ensure the Assembly's central position as the chief deliberative policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations, as well as its role in the process of standard setting and codification of international law.

I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of GRULAC, to congratulate Mr. Sam Kutesa on the excellent work that he has done today and wish him well in the next few months of his continuing presidency. We are confident that Mr. Lykketoft's extensive diplomatic background and accomplished career will contribute enormously to the work of the General Assembly during its seventieth session, and we appreciate his willingness to take on this role. On behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States, I would like to pledge our full support to our new President-elect during his tenure

and wish him every success in carrying out his duties during the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Sauer (Finland): On behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, I would like to extend our sincere congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. As Speaker of the Danish Parliament, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance and Minister of Taxation, Mr. Lykketoft will bring valuable expertise and wisdom from which the General Assembly could benefit during its seventieth anniversary.

During his extensive career as minister and parliamentarian, Mr. Lykketoft has been trusted and respected in domestic politics and internationally. He is deeply familiar with the work and nature of deliberative bodies, and will be well suited to the task of facilitating full and inclusive dialogue while ensuring the efficient conduct of Assembly affairs. Mr. Lykketoft is a visionary leader and strong supporter of the multilateral system and cooperation among nations. He has high regard for the United Nations role in the global arena, and we know that he will guide the General Assembly firmly and wisely. We wish the President-elect every success in doing in so, and he can rely on the full support of the Western European and other States Group.

In this connection, I would also like to express to you, Mr. President, our deep appreciation for the commitment and dedication that you have demonstrated during the current session of the General Assembly. We thank you for your personal leadership and look forward to working with you during the remaining months of your term of office as the United Nations and its Member States prepare to adopt an ambitious agenda of reform for the seventieth General Assembly and the future.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States on behalf of the host country.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): On behalf of the United States, as the host country of the United Nations, I have the honour of warmly welcoming the election of His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft as President of the General Assembly at its historic seventieth session. My Government appreciates the fact that the President-elect is willing to take on this important role in what is sure to be a momentous year for the General Assembly and the United Nations as we mark the occasion of 70 years of our collective commitment to peace, development and security around the world.

As president of the Parliament of Denmark since 2011 and as former Foreign Minister of Denmark, the President-elect brings a unique perspective and record of leadership to this position. My delegation looks forward to working with him on an ambitious agenda that includes the post-2015 development agenda, peacekeeping reform, scales of assessment, countering violent extremism, gender equality and the 20-year anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 10-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society, and energy and climate change.

My delegation welcomes the President-elect's statement of priorities for the next session, including the Assembly's vital work on sustainable development, and wishes him every success in carrying out his duties in the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

The United States, of course, also wishes to take this occasion to express its thanks to you, Mr. President, on your dedicated service as President of the General Assembly's sixty-ninth session.

The President: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 4.

Drawing of lots for the seating protocol for the seventieth regular session

The President: As announced in the *Journal of the United Nations*, we will now proceed to the drawing of lots to determine the Member State that will occupy the first seat in the General Assembly Hall at the seventieth session. In accordance with the established practice, the Secretary-General draws the name of one Member State from a box containing the names of the States members of the General Assembly. The delegation whose name is drawn will occupy the first seat of the General Assembly Hall, and the other countries will follow in the English alphabetical order. The same order will be observed in the Main Committees.

I now invite the Secretary-General to proceed with the drawing of lots.

Having been drawn by a lot by the Secretary-General, Tuvalu was chosen to occupy the first seat in the General Assembly Hall at the seventieth session.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for the drawing of the lots.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

United Nations A/69/PV.95

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

95th plenary meeting
Monday, 15 June 2015, 6 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Emiliou (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6.25 p.m.

Agenda item 6

Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly

Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly for the seventieth session

The Acting President: I should now like to consult members with the view to proceeding to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

In accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly,

> "The Vice-Presidents shall be elected after the election of the Chairmen of the six Main Committees referred to in rule 98, in such as way as to ensure the representative character of the General Committee".

It is my understanding that, since the elections of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees will conform with decision 68/505, of 1 October 2013, on the "Interim arrangement on the pattern for the rotation of the chairs of the Main Committees of the General Assembly", it will not have an impact on the geographical distribution of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and the representative character of the General Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly therefore agrees to proceed to elect the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: In accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we shall now proceed to the election of the 21 Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

All members of the General Assembly are eligible in this election, except the delegations already represented in the General Committee, namely, the delegations whose representative have been elected to the presidency of the General Assembly or to the chairmanships of the Main Committees at its seventieth session.

In accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of the annex to resolution 33/138, of 19 December 1978, the 21 Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth session shall be elected according to the following pattern: six representatives from African States, five representatives from Asia-Pacific States, one representative from Eastern European States, three representatives from Latin American and Caribbean States; one representative from Western European and other States; and five representatives from the permanent members of the Security Council.

In accordance with paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly by secret ballot will

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be dispensed with when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled.

We shall proceed accordingly.

I shall now read the names on the slate of candidates:

African States: Benin, Cameroon, Egypt, Eritrea, Mozambique and Togo.

Asia-Pacific States: Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Nauru, the Republic of Korea and Yemen.

Eastern European States: Azerbaijan.

Latin American and Caribbean States: Colombia, Ecuador and Paraguay.

Western European and other States: Italy.

Since the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each region, I declare those candidates elected, in addition to the five representatives from the permanent members of the Security Council.

The following States have therefore been elected to vice-presidencies of the General Assembly for the seventieth session: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Benin, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Nauru, Paraguay, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Togo, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Yemen.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the States that have just been elected Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

Having elected the Chairpersons of the six Main Committees and the 21 Vice-Presidents for the seventieth session of the General Assembly, the General Committee of the General Assembly at its seventieth session has been fully constituted in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m

United Nations A/69/PV.96

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

96th plenary meeting
Friday, 19 June 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 118 *(continued)*

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the First Committee (A/69/946)

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the First Committee which is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the First Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members, that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I further remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the First Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the First Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the First Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The First Committee recommended that the Assembly adopt the draft decision entitled "Provisional programme of work and timetable of the First Committee for 2015". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 69/520 B).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 160

Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/934)

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee which is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

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The President: Statements shall therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members, that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I further remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take action on the draft resolution. The First Committee recommended that the Assembly adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/289).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 160.

Agenda item 62 *(continued)*

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support (A/69/L.64/Rev.1)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly considered, in a joint debate, agenda item 62 and its sub-items (a) and (b) and agenda item 12 at its 26th and 27th plenary meetings, on 26 October 2014.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.64/Rev.1.

Mr. Muenda (South Africa): I have the honour, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.64/Rev.1, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". The draft resolution continues to be an important text that advances recent developments and initiatives pertaining to Africa's development and growth. The draft resolution highlights the challenges that the continent continues to contend with, including, among others, the fight against poverty, high youth unemployment and continually rising inequality.

Allow me to highlight the following paragraphs, which are key in the draft resolution.

The draft resolution notes the importance of foreign direct investment as a major source of financing for development and its critical role in achieving development objectives and inclusive economic growth, including through the promotion of job creation and the eradication of poverty and hunger, and that it contributes to the active participation of African economies in the global economy and facilitates regional economic cooperation and integration. The draft resolution further emphasizes that economic development, including inclusive industrial development and policies that seek to enhance productive capacities in Africa, can generate employment and income for the poor and therefore be an engine for poverty eradication, as well as achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

The draft resolution welcomes the adoption of the African Union Agenda 2063 as a comprehensive, overarching strategy for socioeconomic transformation for the next decades. In that regard, the Group of 77 and China is encouraged by the importance that Member States attach in the draft resolution to supporting Agenda 2063. Furthermore, the draft resolution recognizes the important role that African regional economic communities can play in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year action plan, in close cooperation with the African Union. In that regard, it encourages African countries

and the international community to give regional economic communities the necessary support to strengthen capacity.

The draft resolution also recognizes the efforts of African countries to enhance food security and nutrition on the continent, including through implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. In addition, the draft resolution welcomes the first biennial report of the Secretary-General (A/69/163) on the review of the implementation of the commitments made to Africa's development, recognizing the importance of the second biennial report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session.

Lastly, the draft resolution highlights the socioeconomic impacts of the Ebola outbreak on the most affected countries in West Africa; recognizes all national, regional and international efforts, including those of the United Nations, to stem the spread of the outbreak; and calls for effective measures to overcome its profound negative effects.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the facilitator of the resolution for bringing the informals to a conclusion. I further express my appreciation to the coordinators for their commitment and to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for its assistance.

I commend the draft resolution A/69/L.64/Rev.1 to the General Assembly for adoption by consensus.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.64/Rev.1, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/69/L.64/Rev.1: Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Senegal, Slovenia and Turkey.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.64/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/69/L.64/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 69/290).

The President: May I take that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 62?

It was so decided.

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/69/L.63/Rev. 1)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly considered in a joint debate agenda item 62 and its sub-items (a) and (b), as well as agenda item 12, during the 26th and 27th plenary meetings, on 26 October 2014.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.63/Rev.1.

Mr. Muenda (South Africa): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.63/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa". The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to all the delegations for their constructive contributions, which have led to the finalization of the text before the Assembly. This is a continued affirmation of the support of the United Nations membership for the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The text continues to be an important platform in stressing Africa's responsibility for peace and security on the continent, and the need for Africa to strengthen its capacity to address the root causes of conflict and resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner.

Allow me to highlight some paragraphs which are key in the draft resolution.

The draft resolution notes the positive trends and advances in obtaining durable peace in Africa and the conditions required for sustainable development, as well as the urgent need to continue developing African human and institutional capacity, particularly in countries emerging from conflict. Furthermore, the draft resolution embraces the importance of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 as a strategic vision and an action plan for ensuring a positive socioeconomic transformation in Africa within the next 50 years, and recognizes that peace and security are critical enablers for sustainable development. It is important to highlight

that the draft resolution also welcomes the progress made by African countries, the AU and subregional organizations in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development.

Also, besides traditional peace and security in Africa, the draft resolution addresses emerging challenges, particularly terrorism, and encourages the United Nations system to support African regional and subregional organizations in the implementation of counter-terrorism action plans. By the same token, the draft resolution demonstrates the commitment of Member States to supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa and to end all wars in Africa by 2020, including by considering defining a concrete five-year action plan to support the attainment of this goal.

In the light of the importance of enhancing the capacity of the African Union to meet the challenges of peace, security and development, the draft resolution underscores the importance of the full implementation of a 10-year capacity-building programme for the AU. The draft resolution welcomes the ongoing efforts, through the Regional Coordination Mechanism, to formulate a successor programme, given that the 10-year capacity-building programme will expire in 2016.

Lastly, I want to take this opportunity to thank the facilitator of the draft resolution for bringing the informals to a speedy conclusion. I also express my appreciation to the two coordinators for their commitment and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for its assistance throughout the negotiation process. I commend draft resolution A/69/L.63/Rev.1 to the General Assembly for its adoption by consensus.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.63/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of a durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of A/69/L.63/Rev.1: Australia, Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Sweden and Turkey.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.63/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/69/L.63/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 69/291).

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Rwanda to make a statement.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Group of African States on the important occasion of the adoption of resolution 69/291, on the causes of conflicts and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

The resolution is timely and relevant. Although the United Nations was established in response to threats to peace and security as a collective effort to save future generations from the scourge of war, today we still witness conflicts of varying lengths with varying death tolls. It is also timely and relevant because many countries in Africa have consistently become theatres of conflict since the United Nations was established 70 years ago. Nearly a third of sub-Saharan countries were involved in active civil wars during the mid-1990s. While the strength of those wars may have decreased, violence and deadly conflicts still exist in Africa, which currently account for two thirds of the Security Council's agenda.

Why must we continue to talk about conflicts and not peace when we should be celebrating the milestones of the seventieth anniversary of the Organization? We agree that existing normative theories on the causes of conflicts have been covered in millions of pages of literature, including those within the United Nations, but in actual conflict there remains little consensus or will to implement even the most effective policies to avert them. For example, in Africa, despite the various mechanisms in place, both preventive and reactive, conflict has been commonplace during the past half-century. Today, entrenched conflicts are not just extremely common; they persist and lead to relapses.

Although in the 1960s, there was some degree of justification at a time when Africa was trying to redefine itself in the wake of decolonization, current conflict tactics have called into question our collective efforts towards a prosperous and conflict-free Africa.

We believe that most of those efforts had been directed towards proximate and immediate causes and that little had been done to address the real root causes.

While the United Nations now shifts its attention towards identifying the underlying causes of conflict, the African Group believes that it is important to invest in the development of strong national institutions, including legislative and judicial bodies, that can establish the foundations of good governance, based on the rule of law, democratic principles and values, and accountability. That investment will ensure ownership of the processes, strengthen existing mechanisms and lead to the particular society's resilience to conflicts.

The African Group advises that cooperation be streamlined and long-term structural measures implemented. Increased cooperation within the African Union and its regional economic communities will aid both the Union and the African Group in their conflict-prevention efforts and in their ability to recognize and share signs of impending or potential conflict. In that light, support for the implementation of the African Union Agenda 2063, the continent's strategic vision and an action plan for ensuring the positive economic transformation in Africa within the next 50 years, is of the utmost importance. If we genuinely wish to make Africa a conflict-free continent, pursuant to the African Union Agenda 2063, actions taken parallel to long-term goals to silence guns and end all wars by 2020 are a prerequisite to achieving a conflict-free continent. In his report (A/69/162), the Secretary-General recognizes that more needs to be done to support that goal, and the African Union welcomes his recommendation that the General Assembly define a five-year concrete actionable plan to that purpose.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the successful promotion of durable peace in Africa would require our redoubled efforts in strengthening structures and policies to create an environment conducive to the promotion of inclusive economic development. Indeed, as recognized in the newly adopted resolution 69/291, development, peace, security and human rights are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. We upon all United Nations entities directly working in those areas in collaboration and cooperation with national Governments to continue developing African human and institutional capacities, particularly in countries emerging from conflict in order to prevent their relapse into conflict. In that regard, it is our hope that this year will mark a turning point with the adoption of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and the ongoing review of peace operations and peacebuilding architecture, which we hope will provide concrete recommendations to promote sustainable peace and development in Africa.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 62 and agenda item 62 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 74 (*continued*)

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft resolution (A/69/L.65)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/69/L.65 (A/69/922)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 74 and its sub-items (a) and (b) and adopted resolution 69/109 at its 67th plenary meeting, on 9 December 2014. Members will also recall that under sub-item (a) of agenda item 74, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/245 at its 76th plenary meeting, on 29 December 2014. Members will further recall that at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 3 June 2015, the representative of Trinidad and Tobago introduced resolution A/69/L.65 on behalf of its sponsors.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.65, entitled "Development of an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction".

In that connection, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the statement regarding programme budget implications, contained in document A/69/922. The Fifth Committee will examine during the main part of the seventieth session of the Assembly the revised estimates arising from the draft resolution and report to the Advisory Committee on the administrative and budgetary questions thereon. Consequently, the financial provisions, as appropriate, will be considered as an additional budget appropriation to be approved by the Assembly for the biennium 2016-2017.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/69/L.65: Algeria, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Cameroon, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, Norway, the Netherlands, Palau, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand and Tunisia.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.65?

Draft resolution A/69/L.65 was adopted (resolution 69/292).

The President: Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Özaydın (Turkey): Regarding resolution 69/292, which was adopted under agenda item 74 (a), I would like to point out that Turkey supports efforts aimed at the efficient, environmentally conscious and sustainable use of maritime spaces, in accordance with international law. Accordingly, Turkey supported the resolution. That having been said, the participation of our delegation in the deliberations and negotiations envisaged in the framework of resolution 69/292, which may result in a possible legally binding instrument, cannot be construed as a change in the established position of Turkey with regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Mr. Medina Mita (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to refer to resolution 69/292, entitled "Development of an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction", which has just been adopted by the General Assembly. We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the facilitator of the resolution, Ambassador Eden Charles of Trinidad and Tobago. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

At this time, I recall that Venezuela is not a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. For that reason, the norms contained in that instrument, particularly those that might be considered international customary law, do not apply to us unless we recognize them in conformity with the exercise of our full sovereignty. Given the importance of the sustainable exploitation of biologically diverse resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, we emphatically maintain and reiterate that this issue must be regulated by a specific international instrument that is distinct from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is imbued with a sense of caution with respect to safeguarding the rights of humankind as a whole.

Venezuela believes that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea cannot be the only legal framework regulating activities related to the oceans and the seas, and cannot be qualified as a universal instrument. We have also indicated that we do not reject the criteria and principles set out in such instruments, and we note that they can be approved and adapted to our needs, taking into account the principles of responsibility, cooperation, equity and sustainability.

It was for those reasons that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expressed a reservation on the matter at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development — a position that we reiterate today. We would also point out that our non-objection to the text adopted at this meeting must not be interpreted as a change in our position with regard to the Convention or its role in a future legal regime applicable to marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Mr. Orozco Barrera (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by emphasizing the spirit of flexibility that characterized the discussions throughout the consultations that resulted in the text of resolution 69/292, entitled "Development of an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction", which has been adopted by consensus. Colombia reaffirms its commitment to addressing matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources

in areas beyond national jurisdiction, the protection of the oceans and the need to ensure that they are fully preserved.

In my delegation's view, the resolution is intended to address the technical and procedural aspects of the meetings of the preparatory committee for the intergovernmental conference on the development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, in accordance with the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group established to study the matter (A/69/780, annex, sect. I). I also recognize the tireless work of the facilitator on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Mr. Thembela Ngculu of the South African delegation, for his endless patience and hard work.

Colombia, a megadiverse country with Pacific and Atlantic coastlines, understands the importance of the process under way, in which a further step forward has been taken today. Colombia has two of the world's largest areas for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity, and we believe that development cannot be achieved at the cost of our national resources. Colombia joined the consensus adoption of the resolution on the meetings of the preparatory committee for the development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, in accordance with the aforementioned recommendations, on the understanding — stated many times in this and other forums — that our support does not imply that we accept the provisions of or obligations emanating from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, to which the Republic of Colombia is not a party.

In that regard, we emphasize that neither our participation in the negotiations, consultations and discussions, nor their outcome, can affect the legal status of Colombia with regard to the Convention or any related instrument, as established in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution. I respectfully request that this statement be included in the official report of the session.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote for this meeting.

I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Marhic (European Union): The European Union (EU) and its member States are pleased to join the consensus on the adoption of the important resolution 69/292, entitled "Development of an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction", which establishes and provides the modalities for a preparatory committee to make substantive recommendations to the General Assembly on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument, taking into account the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group.

We have taken note of the programme budget implications statement presented by the Secretariat. We wish to stress that the estimates presented, which relate to the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017, do not prejudge the Secretary-General's submission to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee of his proposed budget for the 2016-2017 biennium, nor those bodies' consideration of those proposals in the course of the current year. These estimates should therefore not be perceived as having been endorsed by Member States today.

Furthermore, we do not regard the adoption today of a resolution, accompanied solely by a statement of estimated requirements for a future budget period, as implying that Member States have agreed not to comply with rule 153. The Secretary-General's proposed budget for 2016-2017 and subsequent revised estimates that arise will be subject to scrutiny by the ACABQ and then the Fifth Committee in the usual way.

Indeed, in that regard, we note from paragraph 10 of document A/69/922 that a revised estimate will be issued and considered in the main part of the seventieth session in accordance with the normal budged procedures. Nothing we have done today should therefore be seen as pre-empting the negotiation of the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 or of any revised estimates for 2016-2017, which will take place in the fall of 2015.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 74?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 32 (*continued*)

Prevention of armed conflicts

Draft resolution (A/69/L.75)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/285 under this agenda item at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 3 June. I would like to inform members that the debate on this agenda item will be held at a later date, to be announced.

I welcome the imminent adoption of the draft resolution on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict (A/69/L.75), which demonstrates the continuing resolve and commitment of Member States to eliminating such violence. By calling for such an international day for the elimination of sexual violence in conflict, the General Assembly is positioning itself to address concerns that require its multilateral deliberative authority for effective implementation and follow-through.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations constitute grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, but such depraved acts continue to occur and are used to terrorize and control civilian populations in conflict zones. Together, we must prioritize prevention and response efforts, empower victims, provide comprehensive assistance and shift the stigma of shame from the victims of such crimes to those who commit and condone them.

Sexual violence is not a new phenomenon. In my country, Uganda, there was an era when horrendous atrocities were committed, including the abduction of children, the killing of men and the rape of women. Such atrocities fuelled outrage among our people. We did more than merely speak out against them; the people rose against the Government that had perpetuated the atrocities. The use of rape as a weapon of war must be stopped. We should ensure that the perpetrators of such crimes and the superiors who condone their actions are held accountable, and that the victims receive justice.

The full and equal participation of women must be ensured for the establishment of enduring peace. Women must be included in efforts to resolve conflicts and in the post-conflict transition, reconstruction and peacebuilding processes, as well as in initiatives targeting the elimination of sexual violence in conflict. I commend the delegation of Argentina and the sponsors of this initiative. I also thank the numerous other countries and civil society groups, particularly women's organizations, that have championed past initiatives related to women and peace and security, and children in armed conflict.

I note with appreciation the important work under way within the United Nations system, including the initiatives of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children and Armed Conflict. I also thank the members of the High-level Advisory Group for Global Study on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) for their preparatory efforts on the forthcoming global study on women and peace and security. Today, we are reaffirming our collective resolve to work together to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence.

I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.75.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour to have this opportunity to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.75, on the establishment of an International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

As you know and have said, Mr. President, Argentina is a country where fundamental freedoms and human rights are part of State policy and a lifestyle. Latin America and the Caribbean is a region where peace is synonymous with our very future. We are the South, diverse and vibrant, in which, with effort and courage, we are striving to establish a more united, just and equal world.

We are here today in the General Assembly Hall, a place where multilateral democracy is alive as in no other place, forging the bases of global agreements that embody and realize the ideals of our time to eradicate poverty and hunger, establish sustainable development in the economic, social and environmental spheres, and progress towards a more balanced and equitable international order that includes everybody with equal opportunities, conditions and treatment. That is not only a challenge that brings us together; it is a responsibility that we are called to assume together.

Nevertheless, if we are to achieve these objectives we urgently need — as Pope Francis wrote this week in his encyclical *Laudato Si* — a new ethic in international relations and a new universal solidarity — a conversation that includes us all, without discrimination or exclusion, because the challenges we face interest us all, involve us all, inspire us all and affect us all. For that reason, I believe that through this draft resolution today we are entrenching a culture of peace and striving to find specific solutions for thousands and thousands of humans beings, mostly women, girls and boys who are the victims of hatred and intolerance, of cruelty and violence in multiple forms — in this case, sexual violence used in conflicts as a weapon of war to humiliate, dominate, subjugate and degrade our human dignity.

This initiative derives not from individual effort or an individual country, but from the joint work that we have been undertaking for some time now with our Organization and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Bangura, and on Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Leila Zerrougui, with the aim of preventing and eradicating sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, and ensuring that the perpetrators are brought to justice and the victims protected. The initiative therefore seeks to raise the international community's awareness of the need to end sexual violence in conflict, to provide sufficient multidimensional assistance to the victims of such crimes, and to resolutely combat impunity for the perpetrators of such violations through effective accountability under the relevant judicial systems.

In that context, we seek to pursue joint efforts to do away with attitudes and behaviour that hinder the path towards a solution, which range from denial of the problem to indifference and comfortable resignation to ineffective interventions that seek to deal only with the symptoms and not to address the more underlying causes that generate and perpetuate sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. This war crime, this crime against humanity, this form of extreme violence is exercised in particular — and I repeat this — against women, boys and girls, the poor, ethnic and religious minorities and other vulnerable groups.

To that end, Argentina has drafted the draft resolution before us today, which was endorsed by Member States following four rounds of informal consultations. We express our thanks for and appreciation of the great willingness, unequivocal commitment and constructive spirit demonstrated by delegations that participated in the negotiation process. The draft resolution being introduced to the Assembly today follows the guidelines and recent precedents, as well as the guidelines of the Economic and Social Council for the proclamation of international days.

I shall digress from my prepared speech for a moment. While we have too many international days on our calendar, this is a moment to reconsider but not overlook a clear violation of human dignity. I believe that these international days have a meaning because they express the commitment that led to the adoption the Charter of the United Nations — a commitment to peace, human rights, development, dignity and freedom for all men and women.

On the basis of that consensus, we have come up with language previously agreed in the General Assembly or in the Security Council. We respect the agreements that have been reached because they demonstrate, in the framework of the General Assembly and the Security Council, that it is not a path that we are starting upon today. It is a path that we have been moving along together. We have not included divisive elements or references to specific cases. This is not a political game, but an ethical rallying cry for humankind. We have had enough of sexual violence in conflicts.

We have sought to make the draft resolution universal in nature. It is based on two key documents on the subject of sexual violence in conflict: Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) and General Assembly resolution 69/147, of 18 December 2014.

We have chosen 19 June to celebrate the new International Day will because it reflects the date of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008). I reiterate that we are trying to associate the International Day not with any specific conflict situation, but with a tragedy that is suffered by humankind as a whole. We want the draft resolution to be an expression of a strategic institutional vision because the various bodies of the United Nations must not compete among themselves. They must neither cancel one another out nor dominate one another. It is the General Assembly that is making this appeal, in support of the achievements of the Security Council. It is seeking not to replace but to complement and cooperate with the Council. Therefore if the Security Council, in the face of this tragic reality, wishes to work upon and fine-tune its mechanisms and

decisions, we also understand that here in the General Assembly we do not have the right to be indifferent. We have the duty to act.

We greatly value the massive support that we have received from Member States for the draft resolution, which can be inferred from the large number of States that have sponsored this initiative. We have well over 100 sponsors. We know that preventing and eradicating sexual violence in armed conflicts, punishing the perpetrators and providing protection to the victims is not and will not be easy nor will it be immediate, but we also know that we have no excuses for not trying.

We must dare to put an end to this violence once and for all. We must commit ourselves to fully defending the integrity of human lives and to working sincerely and tirelessly to prevent, combat and eradicate this scourge to achieve genuine and lasting peace for the victims — the women, boys, girls, poor people, ethnic minorities, religious minorities and other vulnerable groups. Some people believe that the lives of these people are worth nothing, but we are here to tell them that their lives are important.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.75, entitled "International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed on the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/69/L.75: Afghanistan, Andorra, Belarus, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, China, Cuba, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Iraq, Israel, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, the Republic of Moldova, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Suriname, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Vanuatu.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.75?

Draft resolution A/69/L.75 was adopted (resolution 69/293).

The President: I now call on those delegations wishing to make statements following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Hahn Choonghee (Republic of Korea): First of all, the Republic of Korea welcomes the establishment of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. I would like to thank Argentina and the Offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict for leading us in the establishment of this important day for the elimination of sexual violence in conflict.

As we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action along with the fifteenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, we have taken another meaningful step forward by establishing such an important day for the protection of the rights of women and girls. It is well known that sexual violence has a long history of being committed during war, not only in the form of rape, but also in other forms of comparable gravity, such as sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and forced sterilization.

In all its forms, sexual violence constitutes a violation of the human rights of women and girls, posing a further threat to the peace and security of the local, regional and international communities to which their victims belong. Moreover, sexual violence ultimately perpetuates and exacerbates the vicious cycle of conflicts and human rights violations. The international community has exerted great effort in an attempt to address that heinous crime. Most recently, the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, held in London a year ago, tackled the issue in a more strategic and comprehensive way. The June 2014 Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on reparations for conflict-related sexual violence also provides detailed guiding principles on how to provide tranformative reparations for victims of conflict-related sexual violence. Needless to say, the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict has made a significant impact on dealing with this serious issue.

In spite of such efforts, however, sexual violence in conflicts persists, as evident in the current cases surrounding the international community. Therefore, the international community must further strengthen and redouble its ongoing efforts to end such heinous crimes. In particular, we must end a culture of impunity by holding the perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict accountable. Providing relevant education for the next generation is indispensable for effectively preventing this sort of tragedy from recurring in the future.

In the light of all the work that remains to be done, the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict cannot simply be regarded or dismissed as one of the more than 120 already existing international days. Rather, the international day must be observed annually in a solemn, meaningful and active way. That is precisely why the Republic of Korea proposed that the International Day be observed as a historically significant and highly relevant date, 19 June. On that day seven years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1820 (2008), one of the seven Council resolutions on women and peace and security, which underscores that sexual violence in conflict constitutes a war crime. Moreover, it demands that parties to armed conflict immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians from sexual violence.

While we agree that it is important that all Council resolutions on women and peace and security, including resolution 1820 (2008), be promptly and effectively put into practice, we also recognize that the elimination of sexual violence in conflict depends on much more than the implementation of the relevant resolutions. It cannot be achieved without the concerted efforts of all stakeholders, including Member States, United Nations agencies, civil society and parties to conflict worldwide. I believe that the newly established International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict can provide valuable opportunities for the engagement of all such stakeholders.

As resolution 60/293 emphasizes, the day should serve to inspire all Member States, all organizations and bodies in the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations, and civil society to reaffirm and ensure their commitment to putting an end to sexual violence in conflict, promoting public awareness about the issue and honouring the victims and survivors of sexual violence around the world. If leveraged properly and observed actively, the International Day has the potential to help develop and advance critical international norms on ensuring accountability and on providing assistance and reparations for victims of sexual violence in conflict.

It is our sincere hope that the annual observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict will soon mark a milestone in our noble endeavours to eliminate sexual violence in conflict once and for all, and to ensure dignity and justice for all in the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): First of all, I would like to congratulate the Assembly on its adoption of resolution 69/293, on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. Let me also commend and thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Mrs. María Cristina Perceval, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, for spearheading today's resolution.

It is my great pleasure to be here. I fully concur with the Permanent Representative of Argentina, who stressed that today's meeting is an occasion to adopt the International Day with a view to eliminating sexual violence in conflict from the world and to build up the preparatory process of the resolution. I would like to commend the efforts of everyone who engaged in the preparation for the adoption of the International Day, particularly Argentina, which has shown great leadership and chairmanship in the preparatory process. Let me stress that Japan, as a strong supporter of the International Day, continues to make efforts to eliminate conflict-related sexual violence.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank and congratulate Argentina for introducing the important resolution 69/293 to the General Assembly. Thanks to this initiative, each year on this date the international community will remember the immense price that civilians, particularly women and children, pay in armed conflict by falling victim to sexual violence. We renew our commitment to combating that crime.

I take this opportunity to thank once again the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict, Ms. Bangura, for her exceptional work and commitment, and to recall the importance of having the entire United Nations system improve and enhance its coordination with her Office in order to maintain consistency in fight against this form of violence. The work of the Special Representative is key to maintaining the focus on a form of violence

that, in many cases, is used as a weapon of terror and deployed systematically and with a high degree of sophistication by parties to conflict.

Spain is fully committed to combating this crime. In recent years, we have observed with satisfaction how the international community has come to grasp the overarching importance of this combat in the debates that we have held on international peace and security. Nevertheless, we are still far from including sexual violence among the main threats to peace and security. That continues to be a major challenge, as we have said in many of our statements to this and other forums of the Organization. We believe that the serious nature of this crime calls for a speedy and systematic response with an immediate, practical impact that goes beyond the mere condemnation of the use of sexual violence against civilians as a weapon of war and terror. We believe that there are four particularly important elements in combating this crime.

First is the key importance of civil society as the engine and catalyst of the process of achieving national ownership in combating this serious violation of human rights, and the need for women's organizations to play an increasingly proactive role in peace processes.

Secondly, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes should pay particular attention to the circumstances and specific needs of the victims of sexual violence in the course of reintegration and reinsertion so as to avoid the rejection, stigmatization and exclusion of victims, which contribute greatly to the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators, as well as to the perpetuation of this crime. The fight against this crime in post-conflict situations is vital.

Thirdly, we need to put an end to impunity for these crimes. There are serious shortcomings in the way justice systems deal with conflict-related sexual violence, in some cases because of the lack of targeted training, and in others because of the patriarchal or discriminatory mindset that perpetuates this crime. We stress the need to guarantee that sexual violence is included in all transitional and post-conflict justice processes. The International Criminal Court must also be allowed to play the role that it deserves.

Fourthly and finally, we should ensure the proper training and commitment of the political leadership, high-ranking officers of national armies and security forces, and the contingents of peacekeeping operations. The United Nations must set an example in its zero-tolerance policy.

I wish to close by recalling that the high-level review of Security Council 1325 (2000) to take place in October will give us a historical opportunity to address this problem, especially in giving victims and survivors the attention they deserve, not only in terms of reparations, but also in terms of their reintegration and participation.

The President: I give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

Reverend Monsignor Grech (Holy See): My delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/293, entitled "International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict". We wish to thank the Permanent Mission of Argentina, the main sponsor of the resolution, for its hard work, and for having created an environment of cooperation throughout the entire process.

My delegation condemns in the strongest possible terms all forms of violence against civilians, while reiterating Pope Francis' numerous calls to put an end to the use of violence, especially against children, women and girls in situations of armed conflict, post-conflict and conflict-related situations. They constitute grave violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Throughout the negotiation process my delegation worked closely with the facilitator and with other delegations to produce a text that my delegation could fully support. However, the final resolution contains language that remains undefined and unclear for a number of delegations, including my own, as well as language and references to resolutions on which my delegation has strong reservations. With this in mind, my delegation would like to put on record its reservations on paragraphs 1, 2 and 5.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 32.

The meeting rose at 11.30 p.m.

United Nations A/69/PV.97

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

97th plenary meeting
Thursday, 25 June 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Gunnarsson (Iceland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 130, 149, 150 to 154, 156 to 160, 161 (a) and (b), 162 to 167, 148, 132 and 131.

Before proceeding, I would like to emphasize to delegations that, since the Fifth Committee has just finished its work, the Committees's reports are available only in English. It is my understanding that they will be issued in the other languages as soon as possible, and I thank delegations for their understanding.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

Agenda item 130 (*continued*)

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/688/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.43.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/249 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 130.

Agenda item 149

Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/955)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.46.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/294).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 149.

Agenda item 150

Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/950)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.39.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/295).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 150.

Agenda item 151 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/684/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.47.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/257 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 151.

Agenda item 152 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/685/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.48.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/258 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 152.

Agenda item 153

Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/956)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee

in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.49.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/296).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 153.

Agenda item 154

Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/957)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.50.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/297).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 154.

Agenda item 156

Financing of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/951)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.40.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/298).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 156.

Agenda item 157

Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/958)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.51.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/299).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 157.

Agenda item 158

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/959)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.52.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/300).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 158.

Agenda item 159 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/682/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.53.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/259 B).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda 159.

Agenda item 160 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/934/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.54.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/289 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 160.

Agenda item 161

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/960)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.55.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/301).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Ayzouki (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation joined the consensus on the adoption of resolution 69/301, on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East — specifically the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force — and will vote in favour of the draft resolution (A/C.5/69/L.44) on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, based on a principle that we have consistently reaffirmed, namely, that the responsibility for financing both of those forces must be shouldered by Israel, the transgressing party and occupying Power, which was the reason for the establishment of both forces. That is in conformity with the guiding principles set out in resolution 1874 (S-IV), adopted on 27 June 1963.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 161.

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/954)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 11 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.44, as orally amended in the Fifth Committee.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon". A separate recorded vote has been requested on the fourth preambular paragraph and on operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 14, which was operative paragraph 13 prior to the oral amendment in the Fifth Committee. I shall put them to the vote now.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 14 were retained by 89 votes to 3, with 47 abstentions.

The Acting President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole, as orally amended. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

None

The draft resolution as a whole, as orally amended, was adopted by 137 votes to 3 (resolution 69/302)

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 161.

Agenda item 162 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/686/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.56.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/260 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 162.

Agenda item 163

Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/952)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.41.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/303).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 163.

Agenda item 164

Financing of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/953)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.42.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/304).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 164.

Agenda item 165

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/961)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.57.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/305).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 165.

Agenda item 166 (*continued*)

Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/687/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.58.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/261 B).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 166.

Agenda item 167

Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/962)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.59.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/306).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 167.

Agenda item 148

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/963)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 10 of its report, the texts of which, for the time being, are contained in documents A/C.5/69/L.60, A/C.5/69/L.61 and A/C.5/69/L.62. We will now take decisions on draft resolutions I to III.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Cross-cutting issues". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 69/307).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 69/308).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 69/309).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 148.

Agenda item 132 (*continued*)

Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/422/Add.3)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.63.

The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/274 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 132.

Agenda 131 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/69/702/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report, the text of which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/69/L.64.

The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to the same?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 69/553 C).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 131.

I shall now call on those representatives who have requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I

remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Goren (Israel): With regard to the agenda sub-item on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, in an ever-changing, dynamic world, I am glad that there are a few things one can really depend upon. One of those few things is the outrageous Syrian statement made under that sub-item.

Going through this exercise, from the informal to the formal, brings to mind the words of President Franklin Roosevelt, who said "Repetition does not transform a lie into truth". That is the message that I would send through you, Sir, to the representative of Syria.

Mr. Ayzouki (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is true that the truth is not changed through false arguments. The truth cannot be changed, period.

The Golan Heights is Syrian territory occupied by Israel. Eventually — one day or another — by getting rid of the settlers, the Golan will return to Syria.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. František Ružička, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations and Chair of the Fifth Committee, the members of the Bureau and the Secretary of the Committee, as well as representatives, for a job well done.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it for this meeting.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.

United Nations A/69/PV.98

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

98th plenary meeting
Monday, 6 July 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

In the absence of the President, Ms. Rambally (Saint Lucia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 13 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

(a) Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolution (A/69/L.50/Rev.1)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 13 and its sub-item (a), jointly with agenda item 115, and adopted resolution 69/15 at its 51st plenary meeting, on 14 November 2014. Members will also recall that, under sub-item (a) of agenda item 13, the Assembly adopted resolution 69/282 at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 3 June 2015.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.50/Rev.1.

Mr. Malawane (South Africa): I have the honour, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.50/Rev.1, entitled "Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition". In response to some editorial changes, we would like to make some revisions to the draft resolution.

First, we would request that, in the first preambular paragraph, a reference be included to resolution 68/231 of 20 December 2013.

Secondly, with respect to the third preambular paragraph, we would request that the language of the draft text revert to that agreed on at the negotiations. It should read:

> "Recognizing with concern the need to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide, particularly undernourishment, stunting, wasting, underweight and overweight in children under five years of age and anaemia in women and children, among other micronutrient deficiencies, as well as reverse the rising trends in overweight and obesity and reduce the burden of diet-related non-communicable diseases in all age groups."

The last revision relates to the fourth preambular paragraph, which would read:

> "Taking note with appreciation of the role of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, in collaboration with other relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and other international organizations, to support national Governments,

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upon request, in developing, strengthening and implementing their policies, programmes and plans to address the multiple challenges of malnutrition."

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the facilitator of the draft resolution for her efforts to bring the informal consultations to a speedy conclusion. I would also like to express my appreciation to all delegations for their constructive engagement and to the Secretariat for its assistance. I commend draft resolution A/69/L.50/Rev.1 to the General Assembly for adoption by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.50/Rev.1, entitled "Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition", as orally revised.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, Italy has become a sponsor of A/69/L.50/Rev.1.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.50/Rev.1, as orally revised.

Draft resolution A/69/L.50/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 69/310).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 13.

Agenda item 123 *(continued)*

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries

Draft resolution (A/69/L.78)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 123 and its sub-items (a) to (y) at its 48th plenary meeting, on 11 November 2014.

I give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.78.

Mrs. Mesquita Borges (Timor-Leste): On behalf of the States members of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) — Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and my own country, Timor-Leste — it is my honour to introduce, under agenda item 123 (h), draft resolution A/69/L.78, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries".

The Community encompasses 240 million people in nine countries and four continents bound by a common language and strong cultural ties. Its main goals are to strengthen diplomatic and political dialogue, enhance cooperation in all areas and promote the Portuguese language. The CPLP is committed to reinforcing cooperation among its member States with other States and regional and multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations and its agencies, funds and programmes.

At the tenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the CPLP, held in Dili on 23 July 2014, on the theme "The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and globalization", the leaders recognized the need to strengthen economic and entrepreneurial cooperation and reiterated their commitment to reinforcing the human right to adequate food in national and community policies. At the conference, Equatorial Guinea was admitted as the ninth member of the Community, while Georgia, Japan, Namibia and Turkey were admitted as associate observers.

As stated during the high-level thematic debate on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, the draft resolution aims at deepening the CPLP's partnership with the United Nations in the pursuit of common objectives, particularly in the sectors of human rights, health, education, science, culture, food and agriculture, public administration, science and technology, among others.

The draft resolution commends Guinea-Bissau's return to constitutional order, noting the active engagement of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Guinea-Bissau, as well as of international bilateral and multilateral partners, in particular the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the CPLP and the European Union, and recognizing the role played by the Peacebuilding Commission and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

The draft resolution also welcomes the reactivation of the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau as a prime example of cooperation between the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries to the benefit of the people of Guinea-Bissau. The draft resolution also takes note of the successful holding of the international conference that took place in Brussels on 25 March 2015, co-hosted by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme, in which the CPLP also participated.

In conclusion, on behalf of the CPLP member States, allow me to express our deep appreciation to the countries that contributed to enriching the text and those that sponsored the draft resolution. We are very pleased with such a high number of sponsorship and support this year, and therefore kindly request that the draft resolution be adopted without a vote.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.78, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of A/69/L.78: Canada, Ecuador and the Republic of Moldova.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.78?

Draft resolution A/69/L.78 was adopted (resolution 69/311).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 123.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Culture of Peace

Draft resolution (A/69/L.76)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 14 and adopted resolutions 69/139 and 69/140 at its 72nd plenary meeting, on 15 December 2014. Members will also recall that, under the same item, the Assembly adopted resolution 69/281 at its 91st plenary meeting, on 28 May 2015.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Spain to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.76.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am greatly pleased to see the second draft resolution on the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations being introduced to members of the Assembly for adoption today.

When in 2004 Spain called on the General Assembly to promote an alliance of civilizations, it did so in response to the need for the international community to undertake decisive steps, both at the institutional level and that of civil society, to embrace diversity as a means to make progress, overcome prejudice and work together to promote tolerance. Since the Secretary-General formally launched it in 2005, when the draft resolution presented by Spain became a United Nations initiative under the co-sponsorship of Spain and Turkey, developments have evolved in a way that I cannot label as anything but successful. The Group of Friends includes more than 140 members, drawn from all major geographic regions and international organizations. Six forums have been convened. In the international arena, the initiative has been geared towards concrete actions in the four main priority areas. At the regional level, the focus has been on strategies focused on South-Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and Latin America, with regional consultations held in the Asia-Pacific region and the countries of the League of Arab States.

Two High Representatives appointed by the Secretary-General to lead the Alliance of Civilizations — former President of Portugal Jorge Sampaio and current High Representative Al-Nasser — have contributed to its growth through various biennual projects and a strategic review. I would like to express deep appreciation to both of them for the work they have done. But what is most important is that in the past 10 years the initiative has served as a platform for dialogue and cooperation that has connected civil society with local authorities, universities and much more. The balance now is clearly positive, but that should not prevent us from continuing to renew and strengthen this shared tool to more efficiently respond to the changing threats we face today. The recent increase in terrorist attacks, violence with religious motivations and violent extremism compel us to strengthen the Alliance's functions and

response. We call on its leadership to respond to the expectations of all of us who support the initiative.

We hope that draft resolution (A/69/L.76), the second to be adopted since resolution 64/14, in 2009, which includes more than 100 sponsors — demonstrating the full support of the General Assembly for the initiative — will clearly serve as a working instrument for us for the next several years. I would like therefore to highlight some issues on which I hope this draft resolution will make it possible for the Alliance to focus its activities.

First, the Alliance has the capacity to serve as an instrument to promote the prevention of conflict through mediation and reconciliation. The projects developed should meet the growing need to prevent conflicts before they emerge, thereby contributing positively to resolving conflicts and achieving peace through mediation programmes that promote dialogue and respect among different cultures and religions.

Secondly, the increase in radicalization and violent extremism requires more interinstitutional cooperation throughout the United Nations system and its agencies and programmes, including designing policies that increasingly take into account intercultural and interreligious aspects.

Thirdly, the greater participation of members of national parliaments in promoting intercultural respect and the eradication of the causes of conflicts would be extremely beneficial.

The Group of Friends and the focal points have an important role to play in defining strategies and actions for the Alliance. To that end, we call on the High Representative to make greater use of them. With this draft resolution, Spain and Turkey, the other main sponsor of the initiative, have sought to consolidate the institutional response of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations while also better defining its mandate through its four pillars of action: education, youth, the media and migration.

Finally, we wish to express our deep appreciation to all delegations that actively participated in the negotiations, especially the experts, as well as all those that demonstrated their support through their sponsorship, We now must move from words to deeds that favour greater intercultural and interfaith dialogue.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.76, entitled "United Nations Alliance of Civilizations".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/69/L.76, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Belarus, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Cape Verde, Cameroon, the Czech Republic, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, Grenada, Iraq, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, the Sudan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.76?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 69/312).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers who wish to speak in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Nitzan (Israel): Israel joined the consensus on resolution 69/312, on the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. We support intercultural dialogue and cooperation. However, we would like to place on the record that we do not view the unified Arab strategy mentioned in the resolution as binding on Israel.

Mr. Sargsyan (Armenia): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to commend the leadership and professionalism of the President in advancing the agenda of the General Assembly and to thank him for this opportunity to share our views under this important agenda item.

Armenia recognizes the importance of resolution 69/312, entitled "United Nations Alliance of Civilizations", and appreciates the efforts of its main

sponsors based on the strong belief that respect and tolerance regarding the other's identity, ethnicity, cultural and religious heritage are among the important prerequisites for harmonious and peaceful coexistence.

As stipulated in the resolution, the scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in all their forms and manifestations are deeply troubling. In that context, we are seriously concerned about the spread of the scourge in our immediate neighbourhood, where the official machinery of the State and the Head of State are the actual instigators of hate speech and vilification of the other.

In reference to the location for the seventh Global Forum, envisaged for 2016, we would like to reiterate our enduring concern about the persistent dissemination of and incitement to hatred against Armenia and the Armenian people, including at the highest level, by the leadership of the host country. Such an environment of hatred and intolerance does not bode well for the principles of the Alliance. It also raises significant concerns about the safety and security of potential participants from Armenia at the Forum. It raises questions about the ability of the host country to provide fair, secure and equal conditions for participation and to guarantee the integrity of the Forum. We therefore urge the host country to provide solid guarantees for the safe, secure and equal participation of Armenia at the Forum. We also draw the attention of other members of the Alliance and its secretariat to our concerns.

In conclusion, Armenia hopes that the Alliance will sustain a continued focus on its proclaimed positive message of diversity and harmony among civilizations.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

I shall now give the floor to members who wish to make statements following the adoption of resolution 69/312.

Mrs. Arfaoui Harbaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, at the outset, to welcome the role played by the United Nations in promoting a culture of peace, tolerance and non-violence. We thank the delegations of Spain and Turkey for having prepared resolution 69/312 under agenda item 14, entitled "Culture of peace".

We are all promoting peace. It is the aspiration of all humankind and the very core of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also important that it be at the heart of conflict resolution, given the many problems the world is facing as a result of discord and intolerance of others, which make it difficult to achieve our common objectives of peace, progress and stability.

That situation in turn leads to inequality, discrimination, misunderstanding and radicalism throughout the world. It is therefore necessary to build and strengthen the culture of peace throughout the world, and disseminate tolerance and love of the other and respect for diversity without regard to religion, skin color, gender or religious belief. That is absolutely necessary if we wish to move away from the present situation of inequality and violence.

The initiative endorses those principles and calls for coexistence among cultures and civilizations and the dissemination of the values of tolerance, justice and equality in order to rise to the challenge of chaos and violence. That is why Tunisia is pleased to have been among the first States to adhere to this initiative to bring peoples and nations together. We also support the four pillars of the Alliance of Civilizations.

I take this opportunity to reiterate my country's respect for the initiative's principles and promotion of exchange of knowledge and experiences through young representatives from North Africa and the Middle East, Europe and North America. We are very proud to host a delegation of representatives from Europe and North America, which will take place in October. We are also pleased to be a sponsor of the resolution. We look forward to working tirelessly to strengthen understanding among cultures, religions and civilizations.

Peace must be one of the strategic elements of the post-2015 development agenda. We also agree with the recommendation of the UNESCO Director-General, and her statement that peace is not simply the absence of war; peace requires respect for the rights of people, their dignity and diversity and dialogue among cultures. To implement all of that, we must work tirelessly to build a more stable and peaceful world for our children and future generations.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): I would like to thank the Permanent Missions of Spain and Turkey for introducing the important resolution 69/312, which Bangladesh is pleased to have co-sponsored. Bangladesh believes that all cultures and civilizations contribute to the enrichment of humankind, thereby recognizing the importance of respect and understanding for

religious and cultural diversity throughout the world and encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples.

Bangladesh attaches great importance to intercultural and interreligious dialogue in promoting tolerance and reconciliation in matters related to peaceful coexistence among cultures, religions and beliefs. We emphasize the role of the Alliance of Civilizations in advancing that agenda within the United Nations system in cooperation with the relevant agencies of the system, under the respective mandates, and with Governments and civil society.

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations is one of the major United Nations platforms for intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation. It has connected Governments, lawmakers, local authorities, civil society organizations, the media and individuals devoted to promoting understanding across diverse communities.

In that connection, it is my pleasure to inform the Assembly that Bangladesh has pioneered the culture of peace resolution since 1999. Last year we observed its fifteenth year with the adoption of resolution 69/139, entitled "Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace", sponsored by over 100 countries and adopted by consensus on 15 December 2014.

Resolution 69/312, on a culture of peace, also recognizes the role of the Alliance of Civilizations. The culture of peace resolution notes that all misunderstandings, violence and words emanate from a mindset of intolerance and hatred; and therefore it is worthwhile to create a mindset of tolerance and respect for all, irrespective of religion, ethnicity or color. Let us work together in our endeavour to establish a pro-people, pro-planet and more inclusive and equitable, transformed and peaceful world for all — where no one is left behind.

Mrs. Ibrahimova (Azerbaijan): Azerbaijan joined the consensus on resolution 69/312, and, on behalf of my country, I would like to emphasize its importance. The scope and objectives of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations incorporates humanistic values in societies and reiterates that religion and diversity are a source of peace and coexistence. In this vein, I would like to thank the main sponsors, Turkey and Spain, for their tireless efforts in addressing important elements in the resolution.

My country has always offered a place for religious tolerance. Members of all multi-ethnic and multi-religious groups live as one family in Azerbaijan. It is at this historic time that we all are all facing challenges to the values of the Charter of the United Nations — when neglecting them threatens the values of diversity, identity, pluralism and freedom of religionthat we hold so dear.

Over many decades, the subject of intercultural dialogue played a significant role in building my country's leadership on an international scale. In fact, it gives me a great sense of pride to highlight that my country hosted the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue last spring and, immediately following it, the first-ever European Olympic Games, which included participants from neighbouring countries, despite their political agendas, antipathy, mono-national views or negligence of international law.

As a consequence of my country's dedication to this subject, Azerbaijan will host the Alliance's seventh Global Forum and will welcome the participation of all countries.

Mr. Eler (Turkey): On behalf of the main sponsors, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to all delegations for the consensus adoption of resolution 69/312, on the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. We are particularly encouraged by the broad cross-regional sponsorship of the resolution. We consider that that support is for the noble cause that the Alliance has been standing and working for since its inception. Countering discrimination, xenophobia and extremism — our common effort — is now more important than ever. The resolution also clarifies the institutional standing of the Alliance, which is of critical importance for carrying out its tasks.

On this occasion, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the delegations that actively participated in the negotiation process and enriched the text of the milestone resolution through their valuable contributions. We are confident that, with this renewed political guidance and support, the Secretariat will continue pursuing its activities in an effective manner.

The Acting President: I now call on the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Let me, at the outset, express our deep appreciation for the leadership of Spain and Turkey as the main sponsors of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations as well as the excellent work that they have conducted as main sponsors of resolution 69/312, which the Assembly has just adopted.

In the past year, we have witnessed a dramatic increase in radicalization and violent extremism. The adoption of this resolution comes at a time when the United Nations, its States Members and the international community more than ever need to step up efforts in promoting greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs, based on the human rights of all persons and the prevalence of the universal values at the heart of the Organization.

The task of the Alliance in promoting its four pillars of activity — youth, education, media and migration — as well as the values of conflict prevention, mediation and reconciliation, is paramount to addressing the current challenges we face. The resolution stresses the role of the Group of Friends and focal points. We encourage the High Representative to hold a continuous dialogue with both the Group of Friends and the focal points on strategic priorities, as well as concrete activities, thereby ensuring the necessary ownership of the Governments and partners supporting the Alliance.

We also want to acknowledge the work of UNESCO and the Secretariat in this area, as well as other initiatives, among them the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue. We encourage the Alliance to benefit from the synergies and complementarity of all actors working in its remit.

The consensual adoption of this resolution is a clear sign of the importance that Member States attach to the role of the Alliance and provides the necessary political guidance to pursue its important work.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.